UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
3 1761 02172539 5

47071552

THE SERVICE EDITION

OF

THE WORKS OF

RUDYARD KIPLING

THE NAULAHKA

VOL. I

THE NAULAHKA

A STORY OF WEST AND EAST

BY

RUDYARD KIPLING

AND

WOLCOTT BALESTIER

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON
1915

THE NAULAHKA:

A STORY OF WEST AND EAST

I

There was a strife 'twixt man and maid—
  Oh that was at the birth o' time!
But what befell 'twixt man and maid,
  Oh that's beyond the grip o' rhyme.
'Twas: 'Sweet, I must not bide wi' you,'
  And: 'Love, I canna bide alone';
For baith were young, and baith were true,
  And baith were hard as the nether stone.

Auchinleck's Ride.

NICHOLAS TARVIN sat in the moonlight on the unrailed bridge that crossed the irrigating ditch above Topaz, dangling his feet over the stream. A brown, sad-eyed little woman sat beside him, staring quietly at the moon. She was tanned with the tan of the girl who does not mind wind and rain and sun, and

her eyes were sad with the settled melancholy of eyes that know big mountains, and seas of plain, and care, and life. The women of the West shade such eyes under their hands at sunset in their cabin-doors, scanning those hills or those grassless, treeless plains for the home-coming of their men. A hard life is always hardest for the woman.

Kate Sheriff had lived with her face to the West and with her smouldering eyes fixed upon the wilderness since she could walk. She had advanced into the wilderness with the railroad. Until she had gone away to school, she had never lived where the railroad ran both ways. She had often stayed long enough at the end of a section with her family to see the first glimmering streaks of the raw dawn of civilisation, usually helped out by the electric light; but in the new and still newer lands to which her father's civil engineering orders called them from year to year there were not even arc lamps. There was a saloon under a tent, and there was the section-house, where they lived, and where her mother had sometimes taken to board the men employed by her husband. But it was not these influences alone that had produced the young woman of twenty-three who sat near Tarvin, and who had just told him gently that she liked him, but that she had a duty elsewhere.

This duty, as she conceived it, was, briefly, to

spend her life in the East in the effort to better the condition of the women of India. It had come to her as an inspiration and a command two years before, toward the end of her second year at the St. Louis school, where she went to tie up the loose ends of the education she had given herself in lonely camps.

Kate's mission had been laid on her one April afternoon, warmed and sunned with the first breath of spring. The green trees, the swelling buds, and the sunlight outside had tempted her from the prospect of a lecture on India by a Hindu woman; and it was finally because it was a school duty not to be escaped that she listened to Pundita Ramabai's account of the sad case of her sisters at home. It was a heart-breaking story, and the girls, making the offerings begged of them in strange accents, went from it stilled and awed to the measure of their natures, and talked it over in the corridors in whispers, until a nervous giggle broke the tension, and they began chattering again.

Kate made her way from the hall with the fixed, inward-looking eye, the flaming cheek, and air-borne limbs of one on whom the mantle of the Spirit has descended. She went quickly out into the school-garden, away from everybody, and paced the flower-bordered walks, exalted, rich, sure, happy. She had found herself. The flowers

knew it, the tender-leaved trees overhead were aware, the shining sky had word. Her head was high; she wanted to dance, and, much more, she wanted to cry. A pulse in her forehead went beat, beat; the warm blood sang through her veins; she stopped every little while to take a deep draught of the good air. In those moments she dedicated herself.

All her life should take breath from this hour; she vowed it to the service this day revealed to her, as once to the prophets—vowed all her strength and mind and heart. The angel of the Lord had laid a command upon her. She obeyed joyfully.

And now, after two years spent in fitting herself for her calling, she returned to Topaz, a capable and instructed nurse, on fire for her work in India, to find that Tarvin wished her to stay at Topaz and marry him.

'You can call it what you like,' Tarvin told her, while she gazed at the moon; 'you can call it duty, or you can call it woman's sphere, or you can call it, as that meddling missionary called it at church to-night, "carrying the light to them that sit in darkness." I've no doubt you've got a halo to put to it; they've taught you names enough for things in the East. But for me, what I say is, it's a freeze-out.'

'Don't say that, Nick! It's a call.'

'You've got a call to stay at home; and if you haven't heard of it, I'm a committee to notify you,' said Tarvin doggedly. He shied a pebble into the irrigating ditch, and eyed the racing current with lowering brows.

'Dear Nick, how can you bear to urge any one who is free to stay at home and shirk after what we've heard to-night?'

'Well, by the holy smoke, some one has got to urge girls to stand by the old machine, these days! You girls are no good at all under the new regulations until you desert. It's the road to honour.'

'Desert!' gasped Kate. She turned her eyes on him.

'Well, what do you call it? That's what the little girl I used to know on Section 10 of the N. P. and Y. would have called it. O Kate dear, put yourself back in the old days; remember yourself then, remember what we used to be to each other, and see if you don't see it that way. You've got a father and mother, haven't you? You can't say it's the square thing to give them up. And you've got a man sitting beside you on this bridge who loves you for all he's worth—loves you, you dear old thing, for keeps. You used to like him a little bit too. Eh?'

He slid his arm about her as he spoke, and for a moment she let it rest there.

COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S LIBRARY

'Does that mean nothing to you either? Don't you seem to see a call here, too, Kate?'

He forced her to turn her face to him, and gazed wistfully into her eyes for a moment. They were brown, and the moonlight deepened their sober depths.

'Do you think you have a claim?' she asked, after a moment.

'I'll think almost anything to keep you. But no; I haven't any claim—or none at least that you are not free to jump. But we all have a claim; hang it, the situation has a claim. If you don't stay, you go back on it. That's what I mean.'

'You don't take a serious view of things, Nick,' she said, putting down his arm.

Tarvin didn't see the connection; but he said good-humouredly, 'Oh yes, I do! There's no serious view of life I won't take in fun to please you.'

'You see,—you're not in earnest.'

'There's one thing I'm in earnest about,' he whispered in her ear.

'Is there?' She turned away her head.

'I can't live without you.' He leaned toward her, and added in a lower voice: 'Another thing, Kate—I won't.'

Kate compressed her lips. She had her own

will. They sat on the bridge beating out their difference until they heard the kitchen clock in a cabin on the other side of the ditch strike eleven. The stream came down out of the mountains that loomed above them; they were half-a-mile from the town. The stillness and the loneliness closed on Tarvin with a physical grip as Kate got up and said decisively that she must go home. He knew she meant that she must go to India, and his own will crumpled helplessly for the moment within hers. He asked himself whether this was the will by which he earned his living, the will which at twenty-eight had made him a successful man by Topaz standards, which was taking him to the State Legislature, and which would one day take him much further, unless what ceased to be what. He shook himself scornfully; but he had to add to himself that after all she was only a girl, if he did love her, before he could stride to her side, as she turned her back on him, and say, 'See here, young woman, you're away off!'

She did not answer, but walked on.

'You're not going to throw your life away on this Indian scheme,' he pursued. 'I won't have it. Your father won't have it. Your mother will kick and scream at it, and I'll be there to encourage her. We have some use for your life, if you haven't. You don't know the size of your

contract. The land isn't fit for rats; it's the Bad Lands—yes, that's just what it is, a great big Bad Lands—morally, physically, and agriculturally, Bad Lands. It's no place for white men, let alone white women; there's no climate, no government, no drainage; and there's cholera, heat, and fighting until you can't rest. You'll find it all in the Sunday papers. You want to stay right where you are, young lady!'

She stopped a moment in the road they were following back to Topaz and glanced at his face in the moonlight. He took her hand, and, for all his masterfulness, awaited her word with parted lips.

'You're a good man, Nick, but,' she drooped her eyes, 'I'm going to sail on the 31st for Calcutta.'

II

Beware the man who's crossed in love,
For pent-up steam must find its vent;
Step back when he is on the move,
And lend him all the Continent.
The Buck and the Saw.

TO sail from New York the 31st she must leave Topaz by the 27th at latest. It was now the 15th. Tarvin made the most of the intervening time. He called on her at her home every evening, and argued it out with her.

Kate listened with the gentlest willingness to be convinced, but with a dread firmness round the corners of her mouth, and with a sad wish to be good to him, if she could, battling in her eyes with a sadder helplessness.

'I'm called!' she cried. 'I'm called. I can't get away from it. I can't help listening. I can't help going.'

And, as she told him, grieving, how the cry of

her sisters out of that dim misery, that was yet so distinct, tugged at her heart—how the useless horror and torture of their lives called on her by night and by day, Tarvin could not refuse to respect the solemnly felt need that drew her from him. He could not help begging her in every accent he knew not to hearken to it, but the painful pull of the cry she heard was not a strange or incredible thing to his own generous heart. He only urged hotly that there were other cries, and that there were other people to attend to this one. He, too, had a need, the need for her; and she another, if she would stop a moment to listen to it. They needed each other; that was the supreme need. The women in India could wait; they would go over and look them up later, when the Three C.'s had come to Topaz, and he had made his pile. Meanwhile there was happiness; meanwhile there was love! He was ingenious, he was deeply in love, he knew what he wanted, and he found the most persuasive language for making it seem to be what she wanted in disguise. Kate had to strengthen her resolution often in the intervals between his visits. She could not say much in reply. She had no such gift of communicating herself as Tarvin. Hers was the still, deep, voiceless nature that can only feel and act.

She had the kind of pluck and the capacity for

silent endurance which goes with such natures, or she must often have faltered and turned back from the resolve which had come upon her in the school-garden that spring day, in the two years that followed it. Her parents were the first obstacle. They refused outright to allow her to study medicine. She had wished to be both physician and nurse, believing that in India she would find use for both callings; but since she could follow only one, she was content to enrol herself as a student at a New York training-school for nurses, and this her parents suffered in the bewilderment of finding that they had forgotten how to oppose her gently resolute will through the lifelong habit of yielding to it.

Her ideas had made her mother wish, when she explained them to her, that she had let her grow up wild, as she had once seemed certain to do. She was even sorry that the child's father had at last found something to do away from the awful railroad. The railroad now ran two ways from Topaz; Kate had returned from school to find the track stretching a hundred miles to the westward, and her family still there. This time the boom had overtaken them before they could get away. Her father had bought city lots in the acre form and was too rich to move. He had given up his calling and had gone into politics.

Sheriff's love for his daughter was qualified by his general flatness; but it was the clinging affection not uncommon with shallow minds, and he had the habit of indulgence toward her which is the portion of an only child. He was accustomed to say that 'what she did was about right,' he guessed, and he was usually content to let it go at that. He was anxious now that his riches should do her some good, and Kate had not the heart to tell him the ways she had found to make them do her good. To her mother she confided all her plan; to her father she only said that she wished to learn to be a trained nurse. Her mother grieved in secret with the grim, philosophic, almost cheerful hopelessness of women whose lives have taught them always to expect the worst. It was a sore trial to Kate to disappoint her mother; and it cut her to the heart to know that she could not do what both her father and mother expected of her. Indefinite as the expectation was—it was simply that she should come home and live, and be a young lady, like the rest of the world—she felt its justice and reason, and she did not weep the less for them, because for herself she believed, modestly, that it was ordered otherwise.

This was her first trouble. The dissonance between those holy moments in the garden and the hard prose which was to give them reality and

effect, grew deeper as she went on. It was daunting, and sometimes it was heart-sickening; but she went forward—not always strong, not every moment brave, and only a very little wise, but always forward.

The life at the training-school was a cruel disillusion. She had not expected the path she had set before her to bloom with ease; but at the end of her first month she could have laughed bitterly at the difference between her consecrating dreams and the fact. The dreams looked to her vocation; the fact took no account of it. She had hoped to befriend misery, to bring help and healing to pain from the first days of her apprenticeship. What she was actually set to do was to scald babies' milk-cans.

Her further duties in these early days were no more nearly related to the functions of a nurse, and looking about her among the other girls to see how they kept their ideals alight in the midst of work so little connected with their future calling, she perceived that they got on for the most part by not having any. As she advanced, and was trusted first with babies themselves, and later with the actual work of nursing, she was made to feel how her own purpose isolated her. The others were here for business. With one or two exceptions they had apparently taken up nursing as they

might have taken up dressmaking. They were here to learn how to make twenty dollars a week, and the sense of this dispirited her even more than the work she was given to do as a preparation for her high calling. The talk of the Arkansas girl, who sat on a table and swung her legs while she discussed her flirtations with the young doctors at the clinics, seemed in itself sometimes a final discouragement. Through all ran the bad food, the scanty sleep, the insufficient hours for recreation, the cruelly long hours assigned for work, the nervous strain of supporting the life from the merely physical point of view.

In addition to the work which she shared with the others, she was taking regular lessons in Hindustani; and she was constantly grateful for the earlier days which had given her robust health and a sound body. Without them she must often have broken down; and soon it began to be a duty not to break down, because it had become possible to help suffering a little. It was this which reconciled her finally to the low and sordid conditions under which the whole affair of her preparation went on.

The repulsive aspects of the nursing itself she did not mind. On the contrary, she found herself liking them as she got into the swing of her work; and when, at the end of her first year, she was

placed in charge of a ward at the women's hospital, under another nurse, she began to feel herself drawing in sight of her purpose, and kindled with an interest which made even the surgical operations seem good to her because they helped, and because they allowed her to help a little.

From this time she went on working strongly and efficiently toward her end. Above all, she wanted to be competent—to be wise and thorough. When the time came when those helpless, walled-up women should have no knowledge and no comfort to lean on but hers, she meant that they should lean on the strength of solid intelligence. Her trials were many, but it was her consolation in the midst of them all that her women loved her, and lived upon her comings and goings. Her devotion to her purpose carried her forward. She was presently in full charge, and in that long, bare ward where she strengthened so many sufferers for the last parting, where she lived with death and dealt with it, where she went about softly, soothing unspeakable pain, learning the note of human anguish, hearing no sound but the murmur of suffering or relief, she sounded one night the depths of her own nature, and received from an inward monitor the confirmation of her mission. She consecrated herself to it afresh with a joy beyond her first joy of discovery.

And now, every night at half-past eight, Tarvin's hat hung on the hat-rack in the hall-way of her home. He removed it gloomily at a little after eleven, spending the interval in talking over her mission with her persuasively, commandingly, imploringly, indignantly. His indignation was for her plan, but it would sometimes irrepressibly transfer itself to Kate. She was capable not only of defending her plan, but of defending herself and keeping her temper; and as this last was an art beyond Nick, these sessions often came to an end suddenly, and early in the evening. But the next night he would come and sit before her in penitence, and with his elbows on his knees, and his head supported moodily in his hands, would entreat her submissively to have some sense. This never lasted long, and evenings of this kind usually ended in his trying to pound sense into her by hammering his chair-arm with a convinced fist.

No tenderness could leave Tarvin without the need to try to make others believe as he did; but it was a good-humoured need, and Kate did not dislike it. She liked so many things about him, that often as they sat thus, facing each other, she let her fancy wander where it had wandered in her school-girl vacations—in a possible future spent by his side. She brought her fancy back again sharply. She had other things to think of now;

but there must always be something between her and Tarvin different from her relation to any other man. They had lived in the same house on the prairie at the end of the section, and had risen to take up the same desolate life together morning after morning. The sun brought the morning greyly up over the sad grey plain, and at night left them alone together in the midst of the terrible spaces of silence. They broke the ice together in the muddy river near the section-house, and Tarvin carried her pail back for her. A score of other men lived under the same roof, but it was Tarvin who was kind. The others ran to do what she asked them to do. Tarvin found things to do, and did them while she slept. There was plenty to do. Her mother had a family of twenty-five, twenty of whom were boarders—the men working in one capacity or another directly under Sheriff. The hands engaged in the actual work of building the railroad lived in huge barracks near by, or in temporary cabins or tents. The Sheriffs had a house; that is, they lived in a structure with projecting eaves, windows that could be raised or lowered, and a veranda. But this was the sum of their conveniences, and the mother and daughter did their work alone with the assistance of two Swedes, whose muscles were firm but whose cookery was vague.

C ST. MICHAEL'S COLL. OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Tarvin helped her, and she learned to lean on him; she let him help her, and Tarvin loved her for it. The bond of work shared, of a mutual dependence, of isolation, drew them to each other; and when Kate left the section-house for school there was a tacit understanding between them. The essence of such an understanding, of course, lies in the woman's recognition of it. When she came back from school for the first holiday, Kate's manner did not deny her obligation, but did not confirm the understanding, and Tarvin, restless and insistent as he was about other things, did not like to force his claim upon her. It wasn't a claim he could take into court.

This kind of forbearance was well enough while he expected to have her always within reach, while he imagined for her the ordinary future of an unmarried girl. But when she said she was going to India she changed the case. He was not thinking of courtesy or forbearance, or of the propriety of waiting to be formally accepted as he talked to her on the bridge, and afterward in the evenings. He ached with his need for her, and with the desire to keep her.

But it looked as if she were going—going in spite of everything he could say, in spite of his love. He had made her believe in that, if it was any comfort; and it was real enough to her to hurt her, which *was* a comfort!

Meanwhile she was costing him much, in one way and another, and she liked him well enough to have a conscience about it. But when she would tell him that he must not waste so much time and thought on her, he would ask her not to bother her little head about him: he saw more in her than he did in real estate or politics just then; he knew what he was about.

'I know,' returned Kate. 'But you forget what a delicate position you put me in. I don't want to be responsible for your defeat. Your party will say I planned it.'

Tarvin made a positive and unguarded remark about his party, to which Kate replied that if he didn't care she must; she couldn't have it said, after the election, that he had neglected his canvass for her, and that her father had won his seat in consequence.

'Of course,' she added frankly, 'I want father to go to the State legislature, and I don't want you to go, because if you win the election, he can't; but I don't want to help prevent you from getting in.'

'Don't worry about your father getting that seat, young lady!' cried Tarvin. 'If that's all you've got to lie awake about, you can sleep from now until the Three C.'s comes to Topaz. I'm going to Denver myself this fall, and you'd better

make your plans to come along. Come! How would it suit you to be the speaker's wife, and live on Capitol Hill?'

Kate liked him well enough to go half credulously with him in his customary assumption that the difference between his having anything he wanted and his not having it, was the difference between his wanting it and his not wanting it.

'Nick!' she exclaimed, deriding but doubtful, 'you won't be speaker!'

'I'd undertake to be governor, if I thought the idea would fetch you. Give me a word of hope, and you'll see what I'd do!'

'No, no!' she said, shaking her head. 'My governors are all Rajahs, and they live a long way from here.'

'But say, India's half the size of the United States. Which State are you going to?'

'Which——?'

'Ward, township, county, section? What's your post-office address?'

'Rhatore, in the province of Gokral Seetarun, Rajputana, India.'

'All that!' he repeated despairingly. There was a horrible definiteness about it; it almost made him believe she was going. He saw her drifting hopelessly out of his life into a land on the nether rim of the world, named out of the

Arabian Nights and probably populated out of them. 'Nonsense, Kate! You're not going to try to live in any such heathen fairyland. What's it got to do with Topaz, Kate? What's it got to do with home? You can't do it, I tell you. Let them nurse themselves. Leave it to them! Or leave it to me! I'll go over myself, turn some of their pagan jewels into money, and organise a nursing corps on a plan that you shall dictate. Then we'll be married, and I'll take you out to look at my work. I'll make a go of it. Don't say they're poor. That necklace alone would fetch money enough to organise an army of nurses! If your missionary told the truth in his sermon at church the other night, it would pay the national debt. Diamonds the size of hens' eggs, yokes of pearls, coils of sapphires the girth of a man's wrist, and emeralds until you can't rest —and they hang all that around the neck of an idol, or keep it stored in a temple, and call on decent white girls to come out and help nurse them! It's what I call cheek.'

'As if money could help them! It's not that. There's no charity or kindness or pity in money, Nick; the only real help is to give yourself.'

'All right. Then give me too! I'll go along,' he said, returning to the safer humorous view.

She laughed, but stopped herself suddenly.

'You mustn't come to India, Nick. You won't do that? You won't follow me! You shan't.'

'Well, if I get a place as rajah, I don't say I wouldn't. There might be a dollar in it.'

'Nick! They wouldn't let an American be a rajah.'

It is strange that men to whom life is a joke find comfort in women to whom it is a prayer.

'They might let him *run* a rajah, though,' said Tarvin, undisturbed; 'and it might be the softer snap. Rajahing itself is classed extra hazardous, I think.'

'How?'

'By the accident insurance companies—double premium. None of *my* companies would touch the risk. They might take a vizier, though,' he added meditatively. 'They come from that *Arabian Nights* section, don't they?'

'Well, you are not to come,' she said definitively. 'You must keep away. Remember that.'

Tarvin got up suddenly. 'Oh, good-night! *Good*-night!' he cried.

He shook himself together impatiently, and waved her from him with a parting gesture of rejection and cancellation. She followed him into the passage, where he was gloomily taking his hat from its wonted peg; but he would not even let her help him on with his coat.

No man can successfully conduct a love-affair and a political canvass at the same time. It was perhaps the perception of this fact that had led Sheriff to bend an approving eye on the attentions which his opponent in the coming election had lately been paying his daughter. Tarvin had always been interested in Kate, but not so consecutively and intensely. Sheriff was stumping the district and was seldom at home, but in his irregular appearances at Topaz he smiled stolidly on his rival's occupation. In looking forward to an easy victory over him in the joint debate at Cañon City, however, he had perhaps relied too much on the younger man's absorption. Tarvin's consciousness that he had not been playing his party fair had lately chafed against his pride of success. The result was irritation, and Kate's prophecies and insinuations were pepper on an open wound.

The Cañon City meeting was set down for the night following the conversation just recorded, and Tarvin set foot on the shaky dry goods box platform at the roller skating rink that night, with a raging young intention to make it understood that he was still here—if he *was* in love.

Sheriff had the opening, and Tarvin sat in the background dangling a long, restless leg from one knee. The patchily illumined huddle of auditors

below him looked up at a nervous, bony, loose-hung man, with a kind, clever, aggressive eye, and a masterful chin. His nose was prominent, and he had the furrowed forehead and the hair thinned about the temples which come to young men in the West. The alert, acute glance which went roving about the hall, measuring the audience to which he was to speak, had the look of sufficiency to the next need, whatever it might be, which, perhaps, more than anything else, commends men to other men beyond the Mississippi. He was dressed in the short sack-coat, which is good enough for most Western public functions; but he had left at Topaz the flannel of everyday wear, and was clad in the white linen of civilisation.

He was wondering, as he listened to Sheriff, how a father could have the heart to get off false views on silver and the tariff to this crowd, while his daughter was hatching that ghastly business at home. The true views were so much mixed up in his own mind with Kate, that when he himself rose at last to answer Sheriff, he found it hard not to ask how the deuce a man expected an intelligent mass meeting to accept the political economy he was trying to apply to the government of a State, when he couldn't so much as run his own family? Why in the world didn't he stop his daughter from making such a hash of her life?—that was

what he wanted to know. What were fathers for? He reserved these apt remarks, and launched instead upon a flood of figures, facts, and arguments.

Tarvin had precisely the gift by which the stump orator coils himself into the heart of the stump auditor: he upbraided, he arraigned; he pleaded, insisted, denounced; he raised his lean, long arms, and called the gods and the statistics and the Republican party to witness, and, when he could make a point that way, he did not scorn to tell a story. 'Why,' he would cry defiantly, in that colloquial shout which the political orator uses for his anecdotes, 'that is like a man I used to know back in Wisconsin, who——' It wasn't very much like the man in Wisconsin; and Tarvin had never been in Wisconsin, and didn't know the man; but it was a good story, and when the crowd howled with delight Sheriff gathered himself together a little and tried to smile, and that was what Tarvin wanted.

There were dissentient voices, and the jointness of the debate was sometimes not confined to the platform; but the deep, relishing groans which would often follow applause or laughter, acted as a spur to Tarvin, who had joined the janitor of the rink that afternoon in mixing the dusky brew on the table before him, and who really did not need

a spur. Under the inspiration of the mixture in the pitcher, the passionate resolve in his heart, and the groans and hisses, he melted gradually into an ecstasy of conviction which surprised even himself, and he began to feel at last that he had his audience under his hand. Then he gripped them, raised them aloft like a conjuror, patted and stroked them, dropped them to dreadful depths, snatched them back, to show that he could, caught them to his heart, and told them a story. And with that audience hugged to his breast he marched victoriously up and down upon the prostrate body of the Democratic party, chanting its requiem. It was a great time. Everybody rose at the end and said so loudly; they stood on benches and shouted it with a bellow that shook the building. They tossed their caps in the air, and danced on one another, and wanted to carry Tarvin around the hall on their shoulders.

But Tarvin, with a choking at the throat, turned his back on it all, and, fighting his way blindly through the crowd which had gathered on the platform, reached the dressing-room behind the stage. He shut and bolted the door behind him, and flung himself into a chair, mopping his forehead.

'And the man who can do that,' he muttered, 'can't make one tiny little bit of a girl marry him.'

III

Who are the Rulers of Ind?—to whom shall we bow the knee?
Make thy peace with the women, and men shall make thee L. G.

Maxims of Hafiz.

IT was an opinion not concealed in Cañon City the next morning, that Tarvin had wiped up the floor with his adversary; and it was at least definitely on record, as a result of Tarvin's speech, that when Sheriff rose half-heartedly to make the rejoinder set down for him on the programme, he had been howled back into his seat by a united public opinion. But Sheriff met Tarvin at the railway station where they were both to take the train for Topaz with a fair imitation of a nod and smile, and certainly showed no inclination to avoid him on the journey up. If Tarvin had really done Kate's father the office attributed to him by the voice of Cañon City, Sheriff did not seem to be greatly disturbed by the fact. But Tarvin

reflected that Sheriff had balancing grounds of consolation—a reflection which led him to make the further one that he had made a fool of himself. He had indeed had the satisfaction of explaining publicly to the rival candidate which was the better man, and had enjoyed the pleasure of proving to his constituents that he was still a force to be reckoned with, in spite of the mad missionary notion which had built a nest in a certain young woman's head. But how did that bring him nearer Kate? Had it not rather, so far as her father could influence the matter, put him farther away—as far as it had brought his own election near. He believed he would be elected now. But to what? Even the speakership he had dangled before her did not seem so remote in the light of last night's occurrences. But the only speakership that Tarvin cared to be elected to was the speakership of Kate's heart.

He feared he shouldn't be chosen to fill that high office immediately, and as he glanced at the stumpy, sturdy form standing next him on the edge of the track, he knew whom he had to thank. She would never go to India if she had a man for a father like some men he knew. But a smooth, politic, conciliating, selfish, easy-going rich man —what could you expect? Tarvin could have forgiven Sheriff's smoothness if it had been backed

by force. But he had his opinion of a man who had become rich by accident in a town like Topaz.

Sheriff presented the spectacle, intolerable to Tarvin, of a man who had become bewilderingly well-to-do through no fault of his own, and who now wandered vaguely about in his good fortune, seeking anxiously to avoid giving offence. In his politics he carried this far; and he was a treasury of delight just at this time to the committees of railroad engineers' balls, Knight Templars, excursions, and twilight coteries, and to the organisers of church bazaars, theatricals, and oyster suppers, who had tickets to sell. He went indiscriminately to the oyster suppers and bazaars of all denominations in Topaz, and made Kate and her mother go with him; and his collection of Baptist dolls, Presbyterian embroidery, and Roman Catholic sofa-pillows and spatter-work, filled his parlour at home.

But his universal good-nature was not so popular as it deserved to be. The twilight coteries took his money but kept their opinion of him; and Tarvin, as the opposing candidate, had shown what he thought of his rival's system of politics by openly declining to buy a single ticket. This feeble-foolish wish to please everybody was, he understood very well, at the root of Sheriff's attitude toward his daughter's mania. Kitty

wanted to go so bad, he supposed he'd better let her, was his slouching version of the situation at home. He declared that he had opposed the idea strongly when she had first suggested it, and Tarvin did not doubt that Sheriff, who he knew was fond of her, had really done what he could. His complaint against him was not on the score of disposition but of capacity. He recognised, however, that this was finally a complaint, like all his others, against Kate; for it was Kate's will which made all pleadings vain.

When the train for Topaz arrived at the station, Sheriff and Tarvin got into the drawing-room car together. Tarvin did not yearn to talk to Sheriff on the way to Topaz, but neither did he wish to seem to shirk conversation. Sheriff offered him a cigar in the smoking-room of the Pullman, and when Dave Lewis, the conductor, came through, Tarvin hailed him as an old friend, and made him come back and join them when he had gone his rounds. Tarvin liked Lewis in the way that he liked the thousand other casual acquaintances in the State with whom he was popular; and his invitation was not altogether a device for avoiding private talk with Sheriff. The conductor told them that he had the president of the Three C.'s on behind in a special car, with his party.

'*No!*' exclaimed Tarvin, and begged him to

introduce him on the spot; he was precisely the man he wanted to see. The conductor laughed, and said he wasn't a director of the road—not himself; but when he had left them to go about his duties, he came back, after a time, to say that the president had been asking whom he could recommend at Topaz as a fair-minded and public-spirited man, able to discuss in a reasonable spirit the question of the Three C.'s coming to Topaz. The conductor told him that he had two such gentlemen on board his train at that moment; and the president sent word to them by him that he would be glad to have a little talk with them if they would come back to his car.

For a year the directorate of the Three C.'s had been talking of running their line through Topaz, in the dispassionate and impartial manner of directorates which await encouragement. The board of trade at Topaz had promptly met and voted the encouragement. It took the shape of town bonds and gifts of land, and finally of an undertaking to purchase shares of stock in the road itself, at an inflated price. This was handsome even for a board of trade; but, under the prick of town ambition and town pride, Rustler had done better. Rustler lay fifteen miles from Topaz, up in the mountains, and by that much nearer the mines; and Topaz recognised it as

its rival in other matters than that of the Three C.'s.

The two towns had enjoyed their boom at about the same time; then the boom had left Rustler and had betaken itself to Topaz. This had cost Rustler a number of citizens, who moved to the more prosperous place. Some of the citizens took their houses up bodily, loaded them on a flat car and sent them over to Topaz as freight, to the desolation of the remaining inhabitants of Rustler. But Topaz now began in her turn to feel that she was losing her clutch. A house or two had been moved back. It was Rustler this time which was gaining. If the railroad went there, Topaz was lost. If Topaz secured the railroad, the town was made. The two towns hated each other as such towns hate in the West—malignantly, viciously, joyously. If a convulsion of nature had obliterated one town, the other must have died from sheer lack of interest in life. If Topaz could have killed Rustler, or if Rustler could have killed Topaz, by more enterprise, push, and go, or by the lightnings of the local press, the surviving town would have organised a triumphal procession and a dance of victory. But the destruction of the other town by any other than the heaven-appointed means of schemes, rustle, and a board of trade, would have been a poignant grief to the survivor.

The most precious possession of a citizen of the West is his town pride. It is the flower of that pride to hate the rival town. Town pride cannot exist without town jealousy, and it was therefore fortunate that Topaz and Rustler lay within convenient hating distance of each other, for this living belief of men in the one spot of all the great Western wilderness on which they have chosen to pitch their tents, contains within itself the future and the promise of the West.

Tarvin cherished this sentiment as a religion. It was nearer to him than anything in the world but Kate, and sometimes it was even nearer than Kate. It did duty with him for all the higher aspirations and ideals which beckon other men. He wished to succeed, he wished to make a figure, but his best wish for himself was one with his best wish for the town. He could not succeed if the town failed; and if the town prospered he must prosper. His ambition for Topaz, his glory in Topaz, were a patriotism—passionate and personal. Topaz was his country; and because it was near and real, because he could put his hand on it, and, above all, because he could buy and sell pieces of it, it was much more recognisably his country than the United States of America, which was his country in time of war.

He had been present at the birth of Topaz.

He had known it when his arms could almost encircle it; he had watched and fondled and caressed it; he had pegged down his heart with the first peg of the survey; and now he knew what was good for it. It wanted the Three C.'s.

The conductor presented Tarvin and Sheriff to the president when he had led them back to his private car, and the president made them both known to his young wife—a blonde of twenty-five, consciously pretty and conspicuously bridal—by whose side Tarvin placed himself with his instant perception. There were apartments in the private car before and beyond the drawing-room into which they had been shown. The whole was a miracle of compactness and convenience; the decoration was of a specious refinement. In the drawing-room was a smother of plushes, in hues of no kindred, a flicker of tortured nickel work, and a flash of mirrors. The studied soberness of the woodwork, in a more modern taste, heightened the high pitch of the rest.

The president of the embryo Colorado and California Central made room for Sheriff in one of the movable wicker chairs by tilting out a heap of illustrated papers, and bent two beady black eyes on him from under a pair of bushy eyebrows. His own bulk filled and overflowed another of the frail chairs. He had the mottled cheeks and the

flaccid fulness of chin of a man of fifty who has lived too well. He listened to the animated representations which Sheriff at once began making him with an irresponsive, sullen face, while Tarvin engaged Mrs. Mutrie in a conversation which did not imply the existence of railroads. He knew all about the marriage of the president of the Three C.'s, and he found her very willing to let him use his knowledge flatteringly. He made her his compliments; he beguiled her into telling him about her wedding journey. They were just at the end of it; they were to settle in Denver. She wondered how she should like it. Tarvin told her how she would like it. He guaranteed Denver; he gilded and graced it for her; he made it the city of a dream, and peopled it out of an Eastern fairy tale. Then he praised the stores and the theatres. He said they beat New York, but she ought to see their theatre at Topaz. He hoped they meant to stay over a day or two at Topaz.

Tarvin would not praise Topaz crudely, as he praised Denver. He contrived to intimate its unique charm, and when he had managed to make her see it in fancy as the prettiest, and finest, and most prosperous town in the West, he left the subject. But most of their subjects were more personal, and while he discussed them with her he pushed out experimentally in one direction and

another, first for a chord of sympathy, then for her weak point. He wanted to know how she could be reached. *That* was the way to reach the president. He had perceived it as soon as he entered the car. He knew her history, and had even known her father, who had once kept the hotel where he stayed when he went to Omaha. He asked her about the old house, and the changes of proprietorship since he had been there. Who had it now? He hoped they had kept the head waiter. And the cook? It made his mouth water to think of that cook. She laughed with instant sociability. Her childhood had been passed about the hotel. She had played in the halls and corridors, drummed on the parlour piano, and consumed candy in the office. She knew that cook—knew him personally. He had given her custards to take to bed with her. Oh yes! *He* was still there.

There was an infectious quality in Tarvin's open and friendly manner, in his willingness to be amused, and in his lively willingness to contribute to the current stock of amusement, and there was something endearing in his hearty, manly way, his confident, joyous air, his manner of taking life strongly, and richly, and happily. He had an impartial kindness for the human species. He was own cousin to the race, and own brother to the members of it he knew, when they would let him be.

He and Mrs. Mutrie were shortly on beautiful terms, and she made him come back with her to the bow-window at the end of the car, and point out the show sights of the Grand Cañon of the Arkansas to her. Theirs was the rearmost carriage, and they looked back through the polished sweep of glass, in which the president's car terminated, at the twisting streak of the receding track, and the awful walls of towering rock between which it found its way. They stooped to the floor to catch sight of the massy heights that hung above them, and peered back at the soaring chaos of rock which, having opened to let them through, closed again immitigably as they left it behind. The train went racketing profanely through the tumbled beauty of this primeval world, miraculously keeping a foothold on the knife-edge of space, won for it at the bottom of the cañon from the river on one side, and from the rock on the other. Mrs. Mutrie would sometimes lose her balance as the train swept them around the ceaseless curves, and only saved herself by snatching at Tarvin. It ended in his making her take his arm, and then they stood and rocked together with the motion of the train, Tarvin steadying their position with outstretched legs, while they gazed up at the monster spires and sovereign hills of stone, wavering and dizzying over their heads.

Mrs. Mutrie gave frequent utterance to little exclamations of wonder and applause, which began by being the appropriate feminine response to great expressions of Nature, and ended in an awed murmur. Her light nature was controlled and subdued by the spectacle as it might have been silenced by the presence of death; she used her little arts and coquetries on Tarvin mechanically and half-heartedly, until they were finally out of the cañon, when she gave a gasp of relief, and taking petulant possession of him, made him return with her to the chairs they had left in the drawing-room. Sheriff was still pouring the story of the advantages of Topaz into the unattending ear of the president, whose eyes were on the window-pane. Mutrie received her pat on the back and her whispered confidence with the air of an embarrassed ogre. She flounced into her former seat, and commanded Tarvin to amuse her; and Tarvin willingly told her of a prospecting expedition he had once made into the country above the cañon. He hadn't found what he was looking for, which was silver, but he had found some rather uncommon amethysts.

'Oh, you don't mean it! You delightful man! Amethysts! Real live ones? I didn't know they found amethysts in Colorado.'

A singular light kindled in her eyes, a light of

passion and longing. Tarvin fastened on the look instantly. Was *that* her weak point? If it was—He was full of learning about precious stones. Were they not part of the natural resources of the country about Topaz? He could talk precious stones with her until the cows came home. But would that bring the Three C.'s to Topaz? A wild notion of working complimentary bridal resolutions and an appropriation for a diamond tiara through the board of trade danced through his head, and was dismissed. No public offerings of that kind would help Topaz. This was a case for private diplomacy, for subtle and laborious delicacies, for quiet and friendly manipulation, for the tact of finger-tips—a touch here, a touch there, and then a grip—a case, in fine, for Nicholas Tarvin, and for no one else on top of earth. He saw himself bringing the Three C.'s splendidly, royally, unexpectedly into Topaz, and fixing it there by that same Tarvin's unaided strength; he saw himself the founder of the future of the town he loved. He saw Rustler in the dust, and the owner of a certain twenty-acre plot a millionaire.

His fancy dwelt affectionately for a moment on the twenty-acre plot; the money with which he had bought it had not come easily, and business in the last analysis was always business. But the plot, and his plan of selling a portion of it to the

Three C.'s for a round-house, when the railroad came, and disposing of the rest as town lots by the front foot, were minor chords in the larger harmony. His dream was of Topaz. If promoters, in accord with the high plan of providence, usually came in on the ground floor when their plans went right, that was a fact strictly by the way.

He noticed now, as he glanced at Mrs. Mutrie's hands, that she wore unusual rings. They were not numerous, but the stones were superb. He ventured to admire the huge solitaire she wore on her left hand, and, as they fell into a talk about jewels, she drew it off to let him see it. She said the diamond had a history. Her father had bought it from an actor, a tragedian who had met bad business at Omaha, after playing to empty houses at Denver, Topeka, Kansas City, and St. Jo. The money had paid the fares of the company home to New York, a fact which connected the stone with the only real good it had ever done its various owners. The tragedian had won it from a gambler who had killed his man in a quarrel over it; the man who had died for it had bought it at a low price from the absconding clerk of a diamond merchant.

'It ought to have been smuggled out of the mines by the man who found it at Kimberley, or

somewhere, and sold to an I.D.B.,' she said, 'to make the story complete. Don't you think so, Mr. Tarvin?'

She asked all her questions with an arch of the eyebrow, and an engaging smile which required the affirmative readily furnished by Tarvin. He would have assented to an hypothesis denying virtue to the discoveries of Galileo and Newton if Mrs. Mutrie had broached it just then. He sat tense and rigid, full of his notion, watching, waiting, like a dog on the scent.

'I look into it sometimes to see if I can't find a picture of the crimes it has seen,' she said. 'They're so nice and shivery, don't you think so, Mr. Tarvin, particularly the murder? But what I like best about it is the stone itself. It *is* a beauty, isn't it? Pa used to say it was the handsomest he'd ever seen, and in a hotel you see lots of good diamonds, you know.' She gazed a moment affectionately into the liquid depths of the brilliant. 'Oh, there's nothing like a beautiful stone—nothing!' she breathed. Her eyes kindled. He heard for the first time in her voice the ring of absolute sincerity and unconsciousness. 'I could look at a perfect jewel for ever, and I don't much care what it is, so it *is* perfect. Pa used to know how I loved stones, and he was always trading them with the people who came to the

house. Drummers are great fellows for jewellery, you know, but they don't always know a good stone from a bad one. Pa used to make some good trades,' she said, pursing her pretty lips meditatively; 'but he would never take anything but the best, and then he would trade that, if he could, for something better. He would always give two or three stones with the least flaw in them for one real good one. He knew they were the only ones I cared for. Oh, I do love them! They're better than folks. They're always there, and always just so beautiful!'

'I think I know a necklace you'd like, if you care for such things,' said Tarvin quietly.

'Do you?' she beamed. 'Oh, where?'

'A long way from here.'

'Oh—*Tiffany's*!' she exclaimed scornfully. 'I know you!' she added, with resumed art of intonation.

'No. Further.'

'Where?'

'India.'

She stared at him a moment interestedly. 'Tell me what it's like,' she said. Her whole attitude and accent were changed again. There was plainly one subject on which she could be serious. 'Is it really good?'

'It's the best,' said Tarvin, and stopped.

'Well!' she exclaimed. 'Don't tantalise me. What is it made of?'

'Oh, diamonds, pearls, rubies, opals, turquoises, amethysts, sapphires—a rope of them. The rubies are as big as your fist; the diamonds are the size of hens' eggs. It's worth a king's ransom.'

She caught her breath. Then after a long moment, 'Oh!' she sighed; and then, 'Oh!' she murmured again, languorously, wonderingly, longingly. 'And where is it?' she asked briskly, of a sudden.

'Round the neck of an idol in the province of Rajputana. Do you want it?' he asked grimly.

She laughed. 'Yes,' she answered.

'I'll get it for you,' said Tarvin simply.

'*Yes*, you will!' pouted she.

'I will,' repeated Tarvin.

She threw back her gay blonde head, and laughed to the painted Cupids on the ceiling of the car. She always threw back her head when she laughed; it showed her throat.

IV

Your patience, Sirs, the Devil took me up
To the burned mountain over Sicily,
(Fit place for me), and thence I saw my Earth—
Not all Earth's splendour, 'twas beyond my need;
And that one spot I love—all Earth to me.
And her I love, my Heaven. What said I? . . .
My love was safe from all the powers of Hell—
For you—e'en you—acquit her of my guilt.
But Sula, nestling by our sail-specked sea,
My city, child of mine, my heart, my home.
Mine and my pride—evil might visit there!
It was for Sula and her naked ports,
Prey to the galleys of the Algerine;
Our city Sula, that I drove my price—
For love of Sula and for love of her.
The twain were woven, gold on sackcloth, twined
Past any sundering—till God shall judge
The evil and the good.

The Grand-Master's Defence.

THE president engaged rooms at the hotel beside the railroad track at Topaz, and stayed over the next day. Tarvin and Sheriff took possession of him, and showed him

the town, and what they called its 'natural resources.' Tarvin caused the president to hold rein when he had ridden with him to a point outside the town, and discoursed, in the midst of the open plain, and in the face of the snow-capped mountains, on the reasonableness and necessity of making Topaz the end of a division for the new railroad, and putting the division superintendent, the workshops, and the round-house here.

In his heart he knew the president to be absolutely opposed to bringing the railroad to Topaz at all; but he preferred to assume the minor point. It was much easier, as a matter of fact, to show that Topaz ought to be made a junction, and the end of a division, than it was to show that it ought to be a station on the Three C.'s. If it was anything it would have to be a junction; the difficulty was to prove that it ought to be anything.

Tarvin knew the whole Topaz situation forward and back, as he might have known the multiplication table. He was not president of the board of trade and the head of a land and improvement company, organised with a capital of a million on a cash basis of $2000, for nothing. Tarvin's company included all the solid men of the town; it owned the open plain from Topaz to the foot-

hills, and had laid it out in streets, avenues, and public parks. One could see the whole thing on a map hung in the company's office on Connecticut Avenue, which was furnished in oak, floored with mosaic, carpeted with Turkish rugs, and draped with silk. There one could buy town lots at any point within two miles of the town; there, in fact, Tarvin had some town lots to sell. The habit of having them to sell had taught him the worst and the best that could be said about the place; and he knew to an exactitude all that he could make a given man believe about it.

He was aware, for example, that Rustler not only had richer mines in its near neighbourhood than Topaz, but that it tapped a mining country behind it of unexplored and fabulous wealth; and he knew that the president knew it. He was equally familiar with other facts—as, for example, that the mines about Topaz were fairly good, though nothing remarkable in a region of great mineral wealth; and that, although the town lay in a wide and well-irrigated valley, and in the midst of an excellent cattle country, these were limited advantages, and easily matched elsewhere. In other words, the natural resources of Topaz constituted no such claim for it as a 'great railroad centre' as he would have liked any one to suppose who heard him talk.

But he was not talking to himself. His private word to himself was that Topaz was created to be a railroad town, and the way to create it was to *make* it a railroad town. This proposition, which could not have been squared to any system of logic, proceeded on the soundest system of reasoning. As thus: Topaz was not an existence at all; Topaz was a hope. Very well! And when one wished to make such hopes realities in the West, what did one do? Why, get some one else to believe in them, of course. Topaz was valueless without the Three C.'s. Then what was its value to the Three C.'s? Obviously the value that the Three C.'s would give it.

Tarvin's pledge to the president amounted to this: that if he would give them the chance, they would be worthy of it; and he contended that, in essence, that was all that any town could say. The point for the president to judge was which place would be most likely to be worthy of such an opportunity—Topaz or Rustler—and he claimed there could be no question about that. When you came to size it up, he said, it was the character of the inhabitants that counted. They were dead at Rustler—dead and buried. Everybody knew that: there was no trade, no industry, no life, no energy, no money there. And look at Topaz! The president could see the character of her citizens

at a glance as he walked the streets. They were wide awake down here. They meant business. They believed in their town, and they were ready to put their money on her. The president had only to say what he expected of them. And then he broached to him his plan for getting one of the Denver smelters to establish a huge branch at Topaz; he said that he had an agreement with one of them in his pocket, conditioned solely on the Three C.'s coming their way. The company couldn't make any such arrangement with Rustler; he knew that. Rustler hadn't the flux, for one thing. The smelter people had come up from Denver at the expense of Topaz, and had proved Topaz's allegation that Rustler couldn't find a proper flux for smelting its ore nearer to her own borders than fifteen miles—in other words, she couldn't find it this side of Topaz.

Tarvin went on to say that what Topaz wanted was an outlet for her products to the Gulf of Mexico, and the Three C.'s was the road to furnish it. The president had, perhaps, listened to such statements before, for the entire and crystalline impudence of this drew no retort from his stolidity. He seemed to consider it as he considered the other representations made to him, without hearing it. A railroad president, weighing the advantages of rival towns, could not find it within his concep-

tion of dignity to ask which of the natural products of Topaz sought relief through the Gulf. But if Mutrie could have asked such a question, Tarvin would have answered unblushingly, 'Rustler's.' He implied this freely in the suggestion which he made immediately in the form of a concession. Of course, he said, if the road wanted to tap the mineral wealth of the country behind Rustler it would be a simple matter to run a branch road up there, and bring down the ore to be smelted at Topaz. Rustler had a value to the road as a mining centre; he didn't pretend to dispute that. But a mineral road would bring down all the ore as well as a main line, make the same traffic for the road, and satisfy all proper claims of Rustler to consideration, while leaving the junction where it belonged by virtue of natural position.

He boldly asked the president how he expected to get up steam and speed for the climb over the Pass, if he made Rustler the end of the division, and changed engines there. The place was already in the mountains; as a practical railroad-man the president must know that his engines could get no start from Rustler. The heavy grade by which the railroad would have to get out of the place, beginning in the town itself, prohibited the idea of making it the end of a division. If his engines, by good luck, weren't stalled on the grade, what

COLLEGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

did he think of the annual expense involved in driving heavy trains daily at a high mountain from the vantage-ground of a steep slope? What the Three C.'s wanted for the end of their division and their last stop before the climb over the Pass was a place like Topaz, designed for them by nature, built in the centre of a plain, which the railroad could traverse at a level for five miles before attacking the hills.

This point Tarvin made with the fervour and relief born of dealing with one solid and irrefragable fact. It was really his best argument, and he saw that it had reached the president as the latter took up his reins silently, and led the way back to town. But another glance at Mutrie's face told him that he had failed hopelessly in his main contention. The certainty of this would have been heart-breaking if he had not expected to fail. Success lay elsewhere; but before trying that he had determined to use every other means.

Tarvin's eye rested lovingly on his town as they turned their horses again toward the cluster of dwellings scattered irregularly in the midst of the wide valley. She might be sure that he would see her through.

Of course the Topaz of his affections melted in and out of the Topaz of fact, by shadings and subtleties which no measurement could record.

The relation of the real Topaz to Tarvin's Topaz, or to the Topaz of any good citizen of the place, was a matter which no friendly observer could wish to press. In Tarvin's own case it was impossible to say where actual belief stopped and willingness to believe went on. What he knew was that he did believe; and with him the best possible reason for faith in Topaz would have been that it needed to be believed in hard. The need would have been only another reason for liking it.

To the ordered Eastern eye the city would have seemed a raw, untidy, lonely collection of ragged wooden buildings sprawling over a level plain. But this was only another proof that one can see only what one brings to the seeing. It was not so that Tarvin saw it; and he would not have thanked the Easterner who should have taken refuge in praise of his snow-whitened hills, walling the valley in a monstrous circle. The Easterner might keep his idea that Topaz merely blotted a beautiful picture; to Tarvin the picture was Topaz's scenery, and the scenery only an incident of Topaz. It was one of her natural advantages—her own, like her climate, her altitude, and her board of trade.

He named the big mountains to the president as they rode; he showed him where their big irrigating ditch led the water down out of the heights, and where it was brought along under the

shadow of the foothills before it started across the plain toward Topaz; he told him the number of patients in their hospital, decently subduing his sense of their numerousness, as a testimony to the prosperity of the town; and as they rode into the streets he pointed out the opera-house, the post-office, the public school, and the court-house, with the modesty a mother summons who shows her first-born.

It was at least as much to avoid thinking as to exploit the merits of Topaz that he spared the president nothing. Through all his advocacy another voice had made itself heard, and now, in the sense of momentary failure, the bitterness of another failure caught him with a fresh twinge; for since his return he had seen Kate, and knew that nothing short of a miracle would prevent her from starting for India within three days. In contempt of the man who was making this possible, and in anger and desperation, he had spoken at last directly to Sheriff, appealing to him by all he held most dear to stop this wickedness. But there are limp rags which no buckram can stiffen; and Sheriff, willing as he was to oblige, could not take strength into his fibre from the outside, though Tarvin offered him all of his. His talk with Kate, supplemented by this barren interview with her father, had given him a sickening sense of power-

lessness from which nothing but a large success in another direction could rescue him. He thirsted for success, and it had done him good to attack the president, even with the foreknowledge that he must fail with him.

He could forget Kate's existence while he fought for Topaz, but he remembered it with a pang as he parted from Mutrie. He had her promise to make one of the party he was taking to the Hot Springs that afternoon; if it had not been for that he could almost have found it in his heart to let Topaz take care of herself for the remainder of the president's stay. As it was, he looked forward to the visit to the Springs as a last opening to hope. He meant to make a final appeal; he meant to have it out with Kate, for he could not believe in defeat, and he could not think that she would go.

The excursion to the Hot Springs was designed to show the president and Mrs. Mutrie what a future Topaz must have as a winter resort, if all other advantages failed her; and they had agreed to go with the party which Tarvin had hastily got together. With a view to a little quiet talk with Kate, he had invited three men besides Sheriff—Maxim, the postmaster; Heckler, the editor of the *Topaz Telegram* (both his colleagues on the board of trade); and a pleasant young Englishman, named Carmathan. He expected them to do some

of the talking to the president, and to give him half an hour with Kate, without detriment to Mutrie's impressions of Topaz. It had occurred to him that the president might be ready by this time for a fresh view of the town, and Heckler was the man to give it to him.

Carmathan had come to Topaz two years before in his capacity of colonising younger son, to engage in the cattle business, equipped with a riding-crop, top-boots, and $2000 in money. He had lost the money; but he knew now that riding-crops were not used in punching cattle, and he was at the moment using this knowledge, together with other information gathered on the same subject, in the calling of cow-boy on a neighbouring range. He was getting $30 a month, and was accepting his luck with the philosophy which comes to the adoptive as well as to the native-born citizens of the West. Kate liked him for the pride and pluck which did not allow him the easy remedy of writing home, and for other things; and for the first half of their ride to the Hot Springs they rode side by side, while Tarvin made Mr. and Mrs. Mutrie look up at the rocky heights between which they began to pass. He showed them the mines burrowing into the face of the rock far aloft, and explained the geological formation with the purely practical learning of a man who buys and sells mines. The

road, which ran alongside the track of the railroad already going through Topaz, wandered back and forth over it from time to time, as Tarvin said, at the exact angle which the Three C.'s would be choosing later. Once a train laboured past them, tugging up the heavy grade that led to the town. The narrowing gorge was the first closing in of the hills, which, after widening again, gathered in the great cliffs of the cañon twenty miles below, to face each other across the chasm. The sweep of pictured rock above their heads lifted itself into strange, gnarled crags, or dipped suddenly and swam on high in straining peaks; but for the most part it was sheer wall—blue and brown and purplish-red umber, ochre, and the soft hues between.

Tarvin dropped back, and ranged his horse beside Kate's. Carmathan, with whom he was in friendly relation, gave place to him instantly, and rode forward to join the others in advance.

She lifted her speaking eyes as he drew rein beside her, and begged him silently to save them both the continuance of a hopeless contest; but Tarvin's jaw was set, and he would not have listened to an angel's voice.

'I tire you by talking of this thing, Kate. I know it. But I've got to talk of it. I've got to save you.'

'Don't try any more, Nick,' she answered gently. 'Please don't. It's my salvation to go. It is the one thing I want to do. It seems to me sometimes, when I think of it, that it was perhaps the thing I was sent into the world to do. We are all sent into the world to do something, don't you think so, Nick, even if it's ever so tiny and humble and no account? I've got to do it, Nick. Make it easy for me.'

'I'll be—hammered if I will! I'll make it hard. That's what I'm here for. Every one else yields to that vicious little will of yours. Your father and mother let you do what you like. They don't begin to know what you are running your precious head into. I can't replace it. Can you? That makes me positive. It also makes me ugly.'

Kate laughed.

'It does make you ugly, Nick. But I don't mind. I think I like it that you should care. If I could stay at home for any one, I'd do it for you. Believe that, won't you?'

'Oh, I'll believe, and thank you into the bargain. But what good will it do me? I don't want belief. I want you.'

'I know, Nick. I know. But India wants me more—or not me, but what I can do, and what women like me can do. There's a cry from Mace-

donia, "Come over and help us!" While I hear that cry I can find no pleasure in any other good. I could be your wife, Nick. That's easy. But with that in my ears I should be in torture every moment.'

'That's rough on me,' suggested Tarvin, glancing ruefully at the cliffs above them.

'Oh no. It has nothing to do with you.'

'Yes,' returned he, shutting his lips, 'that's just it.'

She could not help smiling a little again at his face.

'I will never marry any one else, if it helps you any to know that, Nick,' she said, with a sudden tenderness in her voice.

'But you won't marry me?'

'No,' she said quietly, firmly, simply.

He meditated this answer a moment in bitterness. They were riding at a walk, and he let the reins drop on his pony's neck as he said, 'Oh, well. Don't matter about me. It isn't all selfishness, dear. I *do* want you to stay for my own sake, I want you for my very own, I want you always beside me, I want you—want you; but it isn't for that I ask you to stay. It's because I can't think of you throwing yourself into the dangers and horrors of that life alone, unprotected, a girl. I can't think of it and sleep nights. I daren't think

of it. The thing's monstrous. It's hideous. It's absurd. You won't do it!'

'I must not think of myself,' she answered in a shaken voice. 'I must think of *them*.'

'But *I* must think of *you*. And you shan't bribe me, you shan't tempt me, to think of any one else. You take it all too hard. Dearest girl,' he entreated, lowering his voice, 'are you in charge of the misery of the earth? There is misery elsewhere, too, and pain. Can you stop it? You've got to live with the sound of the suffering of millions in your ears all your life, whatever you do. We're all in for that. We can't get away from it. We pay that price for daring to be happy for one little second.'

'I know, I know. I'm not trying to save myself. I'm not trying to stifle the sound.'

'No, but you are trying to stop it, and you can't. It's like trying to scoop up the ocean with a dipper. You can't do it. But you can spoil your life in trying; and if you've got a scheme by which you can come back and have a spoiled life over again, I know some one who hasn't. O Kate, I don't ask anything for myself—or, at least, I only ask everything—but do think of that a moment sometimes when you are putting your arms around the earth, and trying to lift it up in your soft little hands—you are spoiling more lives

than your own. Great Scot, Kate, if you are looking for some misery to set right, you needn't go off this road. Begin on me.'

She shook her head sadly. 'I must begin where I see my duty, Nick. I don't say that I shall make much impression on the dreadful sum of human trouble, and I don't say it is for everybody to do what I'm going to try to do; but it's right for me. I know that, and that's all any of us can know. Oh, to be sure that people are a little better—if *only* a little better—because you have lived,' she exclaimed, the look of exaltation coming into her eyes; 'to know that you have lessened by the slightest bit the sorrow and suffering that must go on all the same, would be good. Even you must feel that, Nick,' she said, gently laying her hand on his arm as they rode.

Tarvin compressed his lips. 'Oh yes, I feel it,' he said desperately.

'But you feel something else. So do I.'

'Then feel it more. Feel it enough to trust yourself to me. I'll find a future for you. You shall bless everybody with your goodness. Do you think I should like you without it? And you shall begin by blessing me.'

'I can't! I can't!' she cried in distress.

'You can't do anything else. You must come to me at last. Do you think I could live if I

didn't think that? But I want to save you all that lies between. I don't want you to be driven into my arms, little girl. I want you to come—and come now.'

For answer to this she only bowed her head on the sleeve of her riding-habit, and began to cry softly. Nick's fingers closed on the hand with which she nervously clutched the pommel of her saddle.

'You can't, dear?'

The brown head was shaken vehemently. Tarvin ground his teeth.

'All right; don't mind.'

He took her yielding hand into his, speaking gently, as he would have spoken to a child in distress. In the silent moment that lengthened between them Tarvin gave it up—not Kate, not his love, not his changeless resolve to have her for his own, but just the question of her going to India. She could go if she liked. There would be two of them.

When they reached the Hot Springs he took an immediate opportunity to engage the willing Mrs. Mutrie in talk, and to lead her aside, while Sheriff showed the president the water steaming out of the ground, the baths, and the proposed site of a giant hotel. Kate, willing to hide her red eyes from Mrs. Mutrie's sharp gaze, remained with her father.

When Tarvin had led the president's wife to the side of the stream that went plunging down past the Springs to find a tomb at last in the cañon below, he stopped short in the shelter of a clump of cottonwoods.

'Do you really want that necklace?' he asked her abruptly.

She laughed again, gurglingly, amusedly, this time, with a little air of spectacle which she could not help lending to all she did.

'Want it?' she repeated. 'Of course I want it. I want the moon, too.'

Tarvin laid a silencing hand upon her arm.

'You shall have this,' he said positively.

She ceased laughing, and grew almost pale at his earnestness.

'What do you mean?' she asked quickly.

'It would please you? You would be glad of it?' he asked. 'What would you do to get it?'

'Go back to Omaha on my hands and knees,' she answered with equal earnestness. 'Crawl to India.'

'All right,' returned Tarvin vigorously. 'That settles it. Listen! I want the Three C.'s to come to Topaz. You want this. Can we trade?'

'But you can never——'

'No matter; I'll attend to my part. Can you do yours?'

'You mean——' she began.

'Yes,' nodded her companion decisively; 'I do. Can you fix it?'

Tarvin, fiercely repressed and controlled, stood before her with clenched teeth, and hands that drove the nails into his palms, awaiting her answer.

She tilted her fair head on one side with deprecation, and regarded him out of the vanishing angle of one eye provocatively, with a lingering, tantalising look of adequacy.

'I guess what I say to Jim goes,' she said at last with a dreamy smile.

'Then it's a bargain?'

'Yes,' she answered.

'Shake hands on it.'

They joined hands. For a moment they stood confronted, penetrating each other's eyes.

'You'll really get it for me?'

'Yes.'

'You won't go back on me?'

'No.'

He pressed her hand so that she gave a little scream.

'Ouch! You hurt.'

'All right,' he said hoarsely, as he dropped her hand. 'It's a trade. I start for India tomorrow.'

V

Now, it is not good for the Christian's health to hustle the Aryan brown,
For the Christian riles, and the Aryan smiles, and he weareth the Christian down;
And the end of the fight is a tombstone white, with the name of the late deceased,
And the epitaph drear: 'A fool lies here who tried to hustle the East.'

Solo from Libretto of Naulahka.

TARVIN stood on the platform of the station at Rawut Junction watching the dust cloud that followed the retreating Bombay mail. When it had disappeared, the heated air above the stone ballast began its dance again, and he turned blinking to India.

It was amazingly simple to come fourteen thousand miles. He had lain still in a ship for a certain time, and then had transferred himself to stretch at full length, in his shirt-sleeves, on the leather-padded bunk of the train which had brought him from Calcutta to Rawut Junction. The journey

was long only as it kept him from sight of Kate, and kept him filled with thought of her. But was this what he had come for—the yellow desolation of a Rajputana desert, and the pinched-off perspective of the track? Topaz was cosier when they had got the church, the saloon, the school, and three houses up; the loneliness made him shiver. He saw that they did not mean to do any more of it. It was a desolation which doubled desolateness, because it was left for done. It was final, intended, absolute. The grim solidity of the cut-stone station-house, the solid masonry of the empty platform, the mathematical exactitude of the station name-board looked for no future. No new railroad could help Rawut Junction. It had no ambition. It belonged to the Government. There was no green thing, no curved line, no promise of life that produces, within eyeshot of Rawut Junction. The mauve railroad-creeper on the station had been allowed to die from lack of attention.

Tarvin was saved from the more positive pangs of home-sickness by a little healthy human rage. A single man, fat, brown, clothed in white gauze, and wearing a black velvet cap on his head, stepped out from the building. This stationmaster and permanent population of Rawut Junction accepted Tarvin as a feature of the landscape: he did not

look at him. Tarvin began to sympathise with the South in the war of the rebellion.

'When does the next train leave for Rhatore?' he asked.

'There is no train,' returned the man, pausing with precise deliberation between the words. He sent his speech abroad with an air of detachment, irresponsibly, like the phonograph.

'No train? Where's your time-table? Where's your railroad guide? Where's your Pathfinder?'

'No train at all of any kind whatever.'

'Then what the devil are you here for?'

'Sir, I am the stationmaster of this station, and it is prohibited using profane language to employees of this company.'

'Oh, are you? Is it? Well, see here, my friend—you stationmaster of the steep-edge of the jumping-off-place, if you want to save your life you will tell me how I get to Rhatore—quick!'

The man was silent.

'Well, what do I do, anyway?' shouted the West.

'What do I know?' answered the East.

Tarvin stared at the brown being in white, beginning at his patent-leather shoes, surmounted by open-work socks, out of which the calf of his leg bulged, and ending with the velvet smoking-cap on his head. The passionless regard of the

Oriental, borrowed from the purple hills behind his station, made him wonder for one profane, faithless, and spiritless moment whether Topaz and Kate were worth all they were costing.

'Ticket, please,' said the baboo.

The gloom darkened. This thing was here to take tickets, and would do it though men loved, and fought, and despaired and died at his feet.

'See here,' cried Tarvin, 'you shiny-toed fraud; you agate-eyed pillar of alabaster——' But he did not go on; speech failed in a shout of rage and despair. The desert swallowed all impartially; and the baboo, turning with awful quiet, drifted through the door of the station-house, and locked it behind him.

Tarvin whistled persuasively at the door with uplifted eyebrows, jingling an American quarter against a rupee in his pocket. The window of the ticket-office opened a little way, and the baboo showed an inch of impassive face.

'Speaking now in offeshal capacity, your honour can getting to Rhatore *viâ* country bullock-cart.'

'Find me the bullock-cart,' said Tarvin.

'Your honour granting commission on transaction?'

'Cert!' It was the tone that conveyed the idea to the head under the smoking-cap.

The window was dropped. Afterward, but not

too immediately afterward, a long-drawn howl made itself heard—the howl of a weary warlock invoking a dilatory ghost.

'O Moti! Moti! O-oh!'

'Ah, there, Moti!' murmured Tarvin, as he vaulted over the low stone wall, gripsack in hand, and stepped out through the ticket wicket into Rajputana. His habitual gaiety and confidence had returned with the prospect of motion.

Between himself and a purple circle of hills lay fifteen miles of profitless, rolling ground, jagged with laterite rocks, and studded with unthrifty trees —all given up to drought and dust, and all colourless as the sun-bleached locks of a child of the prairies. Very far away to the right the silver gleam of a salt lake showed, and a formless blue haze of heavier forest. Sombre, desolate, oppressive, withering under a brazen sun, it smote him with its likeness to his own prairies, and with its home-sick unlikeness.

Apparently out of a crack in the earth—in fact, as he presently perceived, out of a spot where two waves of plain folded in upon each other and contained a village—came a pillar of dust, the heart of which was a bullock-cart. The distant whine of the wheels sharpened, as it drew near, to the full-bodied shriek that Tarvin knew when they put the brakes suddenly on a freight coming into Topaz

on the down grade. But this was in no sense a freight. The wheels were sections of tree butts—square for the most part. Four unbarked poles bounded the corners of a flat body; the sides were made of netted rope of cocoa-nut fibre. Two bullocks, a little larger than Newfoundlands, smaller than Alderneys, drew a vehicle which might have contained the half of a horse's load.

The cart drew up at the station, and the bullocks, after contemplating Tarvin for a moment, lay down. Tarvin seated himself on his gripsack, rested his shaggy head in his hands, and expended himself in mirth.

'Sail in,' he instructed the baboo; 'make your bargain. I'm in no hurry.'

Then began a scene of declamation and riot, to which a quarrel in a Leadville gambling saloon was a poor matter. The impassiveness of the stationmaster deserted him like a wind-blown garment. He harangued, gesticulated, and cursed; and the driver, naked except for a blue loin-cloth, was nothing behind him. They pointed at Tarvin; they seemed to be arguing over his birth and ancestry; for all he knew they were appraising his weight. When they seemed to be on the brink of an amicable solution, the question re-opened itself, and they went back to the beginning, and re-classified him and the journey.

Tarvin applauded both parties, sicking one on the other impartially for the first ten minutes. Then he besought them to stop, and when they would not he discovered that it was hot, and swore at them.

The driver had for the moment exhausted himself, when the baboo turned suddenly on Tarvin, and, clutching him by the arm, cried, almost shouting, 'All arrange, sir! all arrange! This man *most* uneducated man, sir. You giving me the money, I arrange everything.'

Swift as thought, the driver had caught his other arm, and was imploring him in a strange tongue not to listen to his opponent. As Tarvin stepped back they followed him with uplifted hands of entreaty and representation, the stationmaster forgetting his English, and the driver his respect for the white man. Tarvin, eluding them both, pitched his gripsack into the bullock-cart, bounded in himself, and shouted the one Indian word he knew. It happened, fortunately, to be the word that moves all India, '*Challo!*' which, being interpreted, is 'Go on!'

So, leaving strife and desolation behind him, rode out into the desert of Rajputana Nicholas Tarvin of Topaz, Colorado.

VI

In the State of Kot-Kumharsen, where the wild dacoits abound,
And the Thakurs live in castles on the hills,
Where the *bunnia* and *bunjara* in alternate streaks are found,
And the Rajah cannot liquidate his bills;
Where the agent Sahib Bahadur shoots the black buck for his larder,
From the tonga which he uses as *machân*,
'Twas a white man from the west, came expressly to investigate the natural wealth of Hindustan.

Song from Libretto of Naulahka.

UNDER certain conditions four days can dwarf eternity. Tarvin had found these circumstances in the bullock-cart from which he crawled ninety-six hours after the bullocks had got up from the dust at Rawut Junction. They stretched behind him—those hours—in a maddening, creaking, dusty, deliberate procession. In an hour the bullock-cart went two and a half miles. Fortunes had been made and lost in Topaz—happy Topaz!—while the cart ploughed its way across a red-hot river-bed, shut

in between two walls of belted sand. New cities might have risen in the West and fallen to ruins older than Thebes while, after any of their meals by the wayside, the driver droned over a water-pipe something less wieldy than a Gatling-gun. In these waits and in others—it seemed to him that the journey was chiefly made up of waits—Tarvin saw himself distanced in the race of life by every male citizen of the United States, and groaned with the consciousness that he could never overtake them, or make up this lost time.

Great grey cranes with scarlet heads stalked through the high grass of the swamps in the pockets of the hills. The snipe and the quail hardly troubled themselves to move from beneath the noses of the bullocks, and once in the dawn, lying upon a glistening rock, he saw two young panthers playing together like kittens.

A few miles from Rawut Junction his driver had taken from underneath the cart a sword which he hung around his neck, and sometimes used on the bullocks as a goad. Tarvin saw that every man went armed in this country, as in his own. But three feet of clumsy steel struck him as a poor substitute for the delicate and nimble revolver.

Once he stood up in the cart and hallooed, for he thought he saw the white top of a prairie schooner. But it was only a gigantic cotton-wain, drawn by

sixteen bullocks, dipping and plunging across the ridges. Through all, the scorching Indian sun blazed down on him, making him wonder how he had ever dared praise the perpetual sunshine of Colorado. At dawn the rocks glittered like diamonds, and at noonday the sands of the rivers troubled his eyes with a million flashing sparks. At eventide a cold, dry wind would spring up, and the hills lying along the horizon took a hundred colours under the light of the sunset. Then Tarvin realised the meaning of 'the glorious East,' for the hills were turned to heaps of ruby and amethyst, while between them the mists in the valleys were opal. He lay in the bullock-cart on his back and stared at the sky, dreaming of the Naulahka, and wondering whether it would match the scenery.

'The clouds know what I'm up to. It's a good omen,' he said to himself.

He cherished the definite and simple plan of buying the Naulahka and paying for it in good money to be raised at Topaz by bonding the town —not, of course, ostensibly for any such purpose. Topaz was good for it, he believed, and if the Maharajah wanted too steep a price when they came to talk business he would form a syndicate.

As the cart swayed from side to side, bumping his head, he wondered where Kate was. She

might, under favourable conditions, be in Bombay by this time. That much he knew from careful consideration of her route; but a girl alone could not pass from hemisphere to hemisphere as swiftly as an unfettered man, spurred by love of herself and of Topaz. Perhaps she was resting for a little time with the Zenana Mission at Bombay. He refused absolutely to admit to himself that she had fallen ill by the way. She was resting, receiving her orders, absorbing a few of the wonders of the strange lands he had contemptuously thrust behind him in his eastward flight; but in a few days at most she ought to be at Rhatore, whither the bullock-cart was taking him.

He smiled and smacked his lips with pure enjoyment as he thought of their meeting, and amused himself with fancies about her fancies touching his present whereabouts.

He had left Topaz for San Francisco by the night train over the Pass a little more than twenty-four hours after his conference with Mrs. Mutrie, saying good-bye to no one, and telling nobody where he was going. Kate perhaps wondered at the fervour of his 'Good evening' when he left her at her father's house on their return from their ride to the Hot Springs. But she said nothing, and Tarvin contrived by an effort to take himself off without giving himself away. He had made

a quiet sale of a block of town lots the next day at a sacrifice, to furnish himself with money for the voyage; but this was too much in the way of his ordinary business to excite comment, and he was finally able to gaze down at the winking lights of Topaz in the valley from the rear platform of his train, as it climbed up over the Continental Divide, with the certainty that the town he was going to India to bless and boom was not 'on to' his beneficent scheme. To make sure that the right story went back to the town, he told the conductor of the train, in strict confidence, while he smoked his usual cigar with him, about a little placer-mining scheme in Alaska which he was going there to nurse for a while.

The conductor embarrassed him for a moment by asking what he was going to do about his election meanwhile; but Tarvin was ready for him here too. He said that he had that fixed. He had to let him into another scheme to show him how it was fixed, but as he bound him to secrecy again, this didn't matter.

He wondered now, however, whether that scheme had worked, and whether Mrs. Mutrie would keep her promise to cable the result of the election to him at Rhatore. It was amusing to have to trust a woman to let him know whether he was a member of the Colorado legislature or not; but

she was the only living person who knew his address, and as the idea had seemed to please her, in common with their whole 'charming conspiracy' (this was what she called it), Tarvin had been content.

When he had become convinced that his eyes would never again be blessed with the sight of a white man, or his ears with the sound of intelligible speech, the cart rolled through a gorge between two hills, and stopped before the counterpart of the station at Rawut Junction. It was a double cube of red sandstone, but—for this Tarvin could have taken it in his arms—it was full of white men. They were undressed excessively; they were lying in the veranda in long chairs, and between each chair was a well-worn bullock trunk.

Tarvin got himself out of the cart, unfolding his long stiffened legs with difficulty, and unkinking his muscles one by one. He was a mask of dust—dust beyond sand-storms or cyclones. It had obliterated the creases of his clothing and turned his black American four-button cutaway to a pearly white. It had done away with the distinction between the hem of his trousers and the top of his shoes. It dropped off him and rolled up from him as he moved. His fervent 'Thank God!' was extinguished in a dusty cough. He stepped into the veranda, rubbing his smarting eyes.

'Good evening, gentlemen,' he said. 'Got anything to drink?'

No one rose, but somebody shouted for the servant. A man dressed in thin Tussur silk, yellow and ill-fitting as the shuck on a dried cob, and absolutely colourless as to his face, nodded to him and asked languidly—

'Who are you for?'

'No? Have they got them here too?' said Tarvin to himself, recognising in that brief question the universal shibboleth of the commercial traveller.

He went down the long line and twisted each hand in pure joy and thankfulness before he began to draw comparisons between the East and the West, and to ask himself if these idle, silent lotus-eaters could belong to the profession with which he had swapped stories, commodities, and political opinions this many a year in smoking-cars and hotel offices. Certainly they were debased and spiritless parodies of the alert, aggressive, joyous, brazen animals whom he knew as the drummers of the West. But perhaps—a twinge in his back reminded him—they had all reached this sink of desolation *viâ* country bullock-cart.

He thrust his nose into twelve inches of whisky and soda, and remained there till there was no more; then dropped into a vacant chair and surveyed the group again.

'Did some one ask who I was for? I'm for myself, I suppose, as much as any one—travelling for pleasure.'

He had not time to enjoy the absurdity of this, for all five men burst into a shout of laughter, like the laughter of men who have long been estranged from mirth.

'Pleasure!' cried one. 'O Lord! Pleasure! You've come to the wrong place.'

'It's just as well you've come for pleasure. You'd be dead before you did business,' said another.

'You might as well try to get blood out of a stone. I've been here over a fortnight.'

'Great Scot! What for?' asked Tarvin.

'We've all been here over a week,' growled a fourth.

'But what's your lay? What's your racket?'

'Guess you're an American, ain't you?'

'Yes; Topaz, Colorado.' The statement had no effect upon them. He might as well have spoken in Greek. 'But what's the trouble?'

'Why, the King married two wives yesterday. You can hear the gongs going in the city now. He's trying to equip a new regiment of cavalry for the service of the Indian Government, and he's quarrelled with his Political Resident. I've been living at Colonel Nolan's door for three days.

He says he can't do anything without authority from the supreme Government. I've tried to catch the King when he goes out pig-shooting. I write every day to the Prime Minister, when I'm not riding around the city on a camel; and here's a bunch of letters from the firm asking why I don't collect.'

At the end of ten minutes Tarvin began to understand that these washed-out representatives of half a dozen firms in Calcutta and Bombay were hopelessly besieging this place on their regular spring campaign to collect a little on account from a king who ordered by the ton and paid by the scruple. He had purchased guns, dressing-cases, mirrors, mantelpiece ornaments, crochet work, the iridescent Chrismas-tree glass balls, saddlery, mail-phaetons, four-in-hands, scent-bottles, surgical instruments, chandeliers, and chinaware by the dozen, gross, or score as his royal fancy prompted. When he lost interest in his purchases he lost interest in paying for them; and as few things amused his jaded fancy more than twenty minutes, it sometimes came to pass that the mere purchase was sufficient, and the costly packing-cases from Calcutta were never opened. The ordered peace of the Indian Empire forbade him to take up arms against his fellow-sovereigns, the only lasting delight that he or his ancestors had known for

thousands of years; but there remained a certain modified interest of war in battling with bill-collectors. On one side stood the Political Resident of the State, planted there to teach him good government, and, above all, economy; on the other side—that is to say, at the palace gates—might generally be found a commercial traveller, divided between his contempt of an evasive debtor and his English reverence for a king. Between these two his Majesty went forth to take his pleasure in pig-sticking, in racing, in the drilling of his army, in the ordering of more unnecessaries, and in the fitful government of his womankind, who knew considerably more of each commercial traveller's claims than even the Prime Minister. Behind these was the Government of India, explicitly refusing to guarantee payment of the King's debts, and from time to time sending him, on a blue velvet cushion, the jewelled insignia of an imperial order to sweeten the remonstrances of the Political Resident.

'Well, I hope you make the King pay for it,' said Tarvin.

'How's that?'

'Why, in my country, when a customer sillies about like that, promising to meet a man one day at the hotel and not showing up, and then promising to meet him the next day at the store and not

paying, a drummer says to himself, "Oh, all right! If you want to pay my board, and my wine, liquor, and cigar bill, while I wait, don't mind me. I'll mosey along somehow." And after the second day he charges up his poker losings to him.'

'Ah, that's interesting. But how does he get those items into his account?'

'They go into the next bill of goods he sells him, of course. He makes the prices right for that.'

'Oh, we can make prices right enough. The difficulty is to get your money.'

'But I don't see how you fellows have the time to monkey around here at this rate,' urged Tarvin, mystified. 'Where I come from a man makes his trip on schedule time, and when he's a day behind he'll wire to his customer in the town ahead to come down to the station and meet him, and he'll sell him a bill of goods while the train waits. He could sell him the earth while one of your bullock-carts went a mile. And as to getting your money, why don't you get out an attachment on the old sinner? In your places I'd attach the whole country on him. I'd attach the palace, I'd attach his crown. I'd get a judgment against him, and I'd execute it too—personally, if necessary. I'd lock the old fellow up and rule Rajputana for him, if I had to; but I'd have his money.'

A compassionate smile ran around the group. 'That's because you don't know,' said several at once. Then they began to explain voluminously. There was no languor about them now; they all spoke together.

The men in the veranda, though they seemed idle, were no fools, Tarvin perceived after a time. Lying still as beggars at the gate of greatness was their method of doing business. It wasted time, but in the end some sort of payment was sure to be made, especially, explained the man in the yellow coat, if you could interest the Prime Minister in your needs, and through him wake the interests of the King's women.

A flicker of memory made Tarvin smile faintly, as he thought of Mrs. Mutrie.

The man in the yellow coat went on, and Tarvin learned that the head queen was a murderess, convicted of poisoning her former husband. She had lain crouching in an iron cage awaiting execution when the King first saw her, and the King had demanded whether she would poison him if he married her, so the tale ran. Assuredly, she replied, if he treated her as her late husband had treated her. Thereupon the King had married her, partly to please his fancy, mainly through sheer delight in her brutal answer.

This gipsy without lineage held in less than a

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

year King and State under her feet—feet which women of the household sang spitefully were roughened with travel of shameful roads. She had borne the King one son, in whom all her pride and ambition centred, and, after his birth, she had applied herself with renewed energy to the maintenance of mastery in the State. The supreme Government, a thousand miles away, knew that she was a force to be reckoned with, and had no love for her. The white-haired, soft-spoken Political Resident, Colonel Nolan, who lived in the pink house, a bow-shot from the city gates, was often thwarted by her. Her latest victory was peculiarly humiliating to him, for she had discovered that a rock-hewn canal, designed to supply the city with water in summer, would pass through an orange garden under her window, and had used her influence with the Maharajah against it. The Maharajah had thereupon caused it to be taken around by another way at an expense of a quarter of his year's revenue, and in the teeth of the almost tearful remonstrance of the Resident.

Sitabhai, the gipsy, behind her silken curtains, had both heard and seen this interview between the rajah and his Political, and had laughed.

Tarvin devoured all this eagerly. It fed his purpose; it was grist to his mill, even if it tumbled his whole plan of attack topsy-turvy. It opened

up a new world for which he had no measures and standards, and in which he must be frankly and constantly dependent on the inspiration of the next moment. He couldn't know too much of this world before taking his first step toward the Naulahka, and he was willing to hear all these lazy fellows would tell him. He began to feel as if he should have to go back and learn his A B C's over again. What pleased this strange being they called King? what appealed to him? what tickled him? above all, what did he fear?

He was thinking much and rapidly.

But he said, 'No wonder your King is bankrupt if he has such a court to look after.'

'He's one of the richest princes in India,' returned the man in the yellow coat. 'He doesn't know himself what he has.'

'Why doesn't he pay his debts, then, instead of keeping you mooning about here?'

'Because he's a native. He'd spend a hundred thousand pounds on a marriage feast, and delay payment of a bill for two hundred rupees four years.'

'You ought to cure him of that,' insisted Tarvin. 'Send a sheriff after the crown jewels.'

'You don't know Indian princes. They would pay a bill before they would let the crown jewels go. They are sacred. They are part of the government.'

COLLEGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

'Ah, I'd give something to see the Luck of the State!' exclaimed a voice from one of the chairs, which Tarvin afterward learned belonged to the agent of a Calcutta firm of jewellers.

'What's that?' he asked, as casually as he knew how, sipping his whisky and soda.

'The Naulahka. Don't you know?'

Tarvin was saved the need of an answer by the man in yellow. 'Pshaw! All that talk about the Naulahka is invented by the priests.'

'I don't think so,' returned the jeweller's agent judicially. 'The King told me when I was last here that he had once shown it to a viceroy. But he is the only foreigner who has ever seen it. The King assured me he didn't know where it was himself.'

'Pooh! Do you believe in carved emeralds two inches square?' asked the other, turning to Tarvin.

'That's only the centre-piece,' said the jeweller; 'and I wouldn't mind wagering that it's a tallow-drop emerald. It isn't that that staggers me. My wonder is how these chaps, who don't care anything for water in a stone, could have taken the trouble to get together half a dozen perfect gems, much less fifty. They say that the necklace was begun when William the Conqueror came over.'

'That gives them a year or two,' said Tarvin. 'I would undertake to get a little jewellery together myself if you gave me eight centuries.'

His face was turned a little away from them as he lay back in his chair. His heart was going quickly. He had been through mining-trades, land-speculations, and cattle-deals in his time. He had known moments when the turn of a hair, the wrinkle of an eyelid, meant ruin to him. But they were not moments into which eight centuries were gathered.

They looked at him with a remote pity in their eyes.

'Five absolutely perfect specimens of the nine precious stones,' began the jeweller; 'the ruby, emerald, sapphire, diamond, opal, cat's-eye, turquoise, amethyst, and——'

'Topaz?' asked Tarvin, with the air of a proprietor.

'No; black diamond—black as night.'

'But how do you know all these things—how do you get on to them?' asked Tarvin curiously.

'Like everything else in a native state—common talk, but difficult to prove. Nobody can as much as guess where that necklace is.'

'Probably under the foundations of some temple in the city,' said the yellow-coated man.

Tarvin, in spite of the careful guard he was

keeping over himself, could not help kindling at this. He saw himself digging the city up.

'Where *is* this city?' inquired he.

They pointed across the sun-glare, and showed him a rock girt by a triple line of wall. It was exactly like one of the many ruined cities that Tarvin had passed in the bullock-cart. A rock of a dull and angry red surmounted that rock. Up to the foot of the rock ran the yellow sands of the actual desert — the desert that supports neither tree nor shrub, only the wild ass, and somewhere in its heart, men say, the wild camel.

Tarvin stared through the palpitating haze of heat, and saw that there was neither life nor motion about the city. It was a little after noon-day, and his majesty's subjects were asleep. This solid block of loneliness, then, was the visible end of his journey — the Jericho he had come from Topaz to attack.

And he reflected, 'Now, if a man should come from New York in a bullock-cart to whistle around the Sauguache Range, I wonder what sort of fool I'd call him!'

He rose and stretched his dusty limbs. 'What time does it get cool enough to take in the town?' he asked.

'Do *what* to the town? Better be careful.

You might find yourself in difficulties with the Resident,' warned his friendly adviser.

Tarvin could not understand why a stroll through the deadest town he had ever seen should be forbidden. But he held his peace, inasmuch as he was in a strange country, where nothing, save a certain desire for command on the part of the women, was as he had known it. He would take in the town thoroughly. Otherwise he began to fear that its monumental sloth—there was still no sign of life upon the walled rock—would swallow him up, or turn him into a languid Calcutta drummer.

Something must be done at once before his wits were numbed. He inquired the way to the telegraph-office, half doubting, even though he saw the wires, the existence of a telegraph in Rhatore.

'By the way,' one of the men called after him, 'it's worth remembering that any telegram you send here is handed all round the court and shown to the King.'

Tarvin thanked him, and thought this *was* worth remembering, as he trudged on through the sand toward a desecrated Mohammedan mosque near the road to the city which was doing duty as a telegraph-office.

A trooper of the State was lying fast asleep on

the threshold, his horse picketed to a long bamboo lance driven into the ground. Other sign of life there was none, save a few doves cooing sleepily in the darkness under the arch.

Tarvin gazed about him dispiritedly for the blue and white sign of the Western Union, or its analogue in this queer land. He saw that the telegraph wires disappeared through a hole in the dome of the mosque. There were two or three low wooden doors under the archway. He opened one at random, and stepped upon a warm, hairy body, which sprang up with a grunt. Tarvin had hardly time to draw back before a young buffalo calf rushed out. Undisturbed, he opened another door, disclosing a flight of steps eighteen inches wide. Up these he travelled with difficulty, hoping to catch the sound of the ticker. But the building was as silent as the tomb it had once been. He opened another door, and stumbled into a room, the domed ceiling of which was inlaid with fretted tracery in barbaric colours, picked out with myriads of tiny fragments of mirrors. The flood of colour and the glare of the snow-white floor made him blink after the pitchy darkness of the staircase. Still, the place was undoubtedly a telegraph-office, for an antiquated instrument was clamped upon a cheap dressing-table. The sunlight streamed through the gash

in the dome which had been made to admit the telegraph wires, and which had not been repaired.

Tarvin stood in the sunlight and stared about him. He took off the soft, wide-brimmed Western hat, which he was finding too warm for this climate, and mopped his forehead. As he stood in the sunlight, straight, clean-limbed, and strong, one who lurked in this mysterious spot with designs upon him would have decided that he did not look a wholesome person to attack. He pulled at the long thin moustache which drooped at the corners of his mouth in a curve shaped by the habit of tugging at it in thought, and muttered picturesque remarks in a tongue to which these walls had never echoed. What chance was there of communicating with the United States of America from this abyss of oblivion? Even the 'damn' that came back to him from the depths of the dome sounded foreign and inexpressive.

A sheeted figure lay on the floor. 'It *takes* a dead man to run this place!' exclaimed Tarvin, discovering the body. 'Hallo, you! Get up there!'

The figure rose to its feet with grunts, cast away its covering, and disclosed a very sleepy native in a complete suit of dove-coloured satin.

'Ho!' cried he.

'Yes,' returned Tarvin imperturbably.

'You want to see me?'

'No; I want to send a telegram, if there's any electric fluid in this old tomb.'

'Sir,' said the native affably, 'you have come to right shop. I am telegraph operator and postmaster-general of this State.'

He seated himself in the decayed chair, opened a drawer of the table, and began to search for something.

'What you looking for, young man? Lost your connection with Calcutta?'

'Most gentlemen bring their own forms,' he said, with a distant note of reproach in his bland manner. 'But here is form. Have you got pencil?'

'Oh, see here, don't let me strain this office. Hadn't you better go and lie down again? I'll tap the message off myself. What's your signal for Calcutta?'

'You, sir, not understanding this instrument.'

'*Don't* I? You ought to see me milk the wires at election time.'

'This instrument require most judeecious handling, sir. You write message. I send. That is proper division of labour. Ha! ha!'

Tarvin wrote his message, which ran thus:—

'*Getting there. Remember Three C.'s.*—TARVIN.'

It was addressed to Mrs. Mutrie at the address she had given him in Denver.

'Rush it!' he said, as he handed it back over the table to the smiling image.

'All right; no fear. I am here for that,' returned the native, understanding in general terms from the cabalistic word that his customer was in haste.

'Will the thing ever get there?' drawled Tarvin, as he leaned over the table and met the gaze of the satin-clothed being with an air of good comradeship, which invited him to let him into the fraud, if there was one.

'Oh yes; to-morrow. Denver is in the United States America,' said the native, looking up at Tarvin with childish glee in the sense of knowledge.

'Shake!' exclaimed Tarvin, offering him a hairy fist. 'You've been well brought up.'

He stayed half an hour fraternising with the man on the foundation of this common ground of knowledge, and saw him work the message off on his instrument, his heart going out on that first click all the way home. In the midst of the conversation the native suddenly dived into the cluttered drawer of the dressing-table, and drew forth a telegram covered with dust, which he offered to Tarvin's scrutiny.

'You knowing any new Englishman coming to Rhatore name Turpin?' he asked.

Tarvin stared at the address a moment, and then tore open the envelope to find, as he expected, that it was for him. It was from Mrs. Mutrie, congratulating him on his election to the Colorado legislature by a majority of 1518 over Sheriff.

Tarvin uttered an abandoned howl of joy, executed a war-dance on the white floor of the mosque, snatched the astounded operator from behind his table, and whirled him away into a mad waltz. Then, making a low salaam to the now wholly bewildered native, he rushed from the building, waving his cable in the air, and went capering up the road.

When he was back at the rest-house again, he retired to a bath to grapple seriously with the dust of the desert, while the commercial travellers without discussed his comings and goings. He plunged about luxuriously in a gigantic bowl of earthenware; while a brown-skinned water-carrier sluiced the contents of a goat-skin over his head.

A voice in the veranda, a little louder than the others, said, 'He's probably come prospecting for gold, or boring for oil, and won't tell.'

Tarvin winked a wet left eye.

VII

There is pleasure in the wet, wet clay,
When the artist's hand is potting it;
There is pleasure in the wet, wet lay,
When the poet's pad is blotting it;
There is pleasure in the shine of your picture on the line
At the Royal Acade-my;
But the pleasure felt in these is as chalk to Cheddar cheese,
When it comes to a well-made Lie:
To a quite unwreckable Lie,
To a most impeccable Lie,
To a water-tight, fireproof, angle-iron, sunk-hinge, time-lock, steel-faced Lie!
Not a private hansom Lie,
But a pair and brougham Lie,
Not a little place at Tooting, but a country-house with shooting,
And a ring-park, deer-park Lie.

—*Op.* 3.

A COMMON rest-house in the desert is not over-stocked with furniture or carpets. One table, two chairs, a rack on the door for clothing, and a list of charges, are sufficient

for each room; and the traveller brings his own bedding. Tarvin read the tariff with deep interest before falling asleep that night, and discovered that this was only in a distant sense a hotel, and that he was open to the danger of being turned out at twelve hours' notice, after he had inhabited his unhomely apartment for a day and a night.

Before he went to bed he called for pen and ink, and wrote a letter to Mrs. Mutrie on the notepaper of his land and improvement company. Under the map of Colorado, at the top, which confidently showed the railroad system of the State converging at Topaz, was the legend, 'N. Tarvin, Real Estate and Insurance Agent.' The tone of his letter was even more assured than the map.

He dreamed that night that the Maharajah was swapping the Naulahka with him for town lots. His Majesty backed out just as they were concluding the deal, and demanded that Tarvin should throw in his own favourite mine, the 'Lingering Lode,' to boot. In his dream Tarvin had kicked at this, and the Rajah had responded, 'All right, my boy; no Three C.'s then,' and Tarvin had yielded the point, had hung the Naulahka about Mrs. Mutrie's neck, and in the same breath had heard the speaker of the Colorado legislature declaring that since the coming of the Three C.'s

he officially recognised Topaz as the metropolis of the West. Then, perceiving that he himself was the speaker, Tarvin began to doubt the genuineness of these remarks, and awoke, with aloes in his mouth, to find the dawn spreading over Rhatore, and beckoning him out to the conquests of reality.

He was confronted in the veranda by a grizzled, bearded, booted native soldier on a camel, who handed down to him a greasy little brown book, bearing the legend, *Please write 'seen.'*

Tarvin looked at this new development from the heated landscape with interest, but not with an outward effect of surprise. He had already learned one secret of the East—never to be surprised at anything. He took the book and read, on a thumbed page, the announcement, 'Divine services conducted on Sundays in the drawing-room of the residency at 7.30 A.M. Strangers are cordially invited to attend. (Signed) L. R. Estes, American Presbyterian Mission.'

'They don't get up early for nothing in this country,' mused Tarvin. '"Church at 7.30 A.M." When do they have dinner? Well, what do I do about this?' he asked the man aloud. The trooper and camel looked at him together, and grunted as they went away. It was no concern of theirs.

Tarvin addressed a remark of confused purport

to the retreating figures. This was plainly not a country in which business could be done at red heat. He hungered for the moment when, with the necklace in his pocket and Kate by his side, he should again set his face westward.

The shortest way to that was to go over to call on the missionary. He was an American, and could tell him about the Naulahka if anybody could; Tarvin had also a shrewd suspicion that he could tell him something about Kate.

The missionary's home, which was just without the city walls, was also of red sandstone, one storey high, and as bare of vines or any living thing as the station at Rawut Junction. But he presently found that there were living beings inside the house, with warm hearts and a welcome for him. Mrs. Estes turned out to be that motherly and kindly woman, with the instinct for housekeeping, who would make a home of a cave. She had a round, smooth face, a soft skin, and quiet, happy eyes. She may have been forty. Her still untinged brown hair was brushed smoothly back; her effect was sedate and restful.

Their visitor had learned that they came from Bangor, Maine, had founded a tie of brotherhood on the fact that his father had been born on a farm down Portland way, and had been invited to breakfast before he had been ten minutes in the

house. Tarvin's gift of sympathy was irresistible. He was the kind of man to whom men confide their heart-secrets, and the canker of their inmost lives, in hotel smoking-rooms. He was the repository of scores of tales of misery and error which he could do nothing to help, and of a few which he could help, and had helped. Before breakfast was ready he had from Estes and his wife the whole picture of their situation at Rhatore. They told him of their troubles with the Maharajah and with the Maharajah's wives, and of the exceeding unfruitfulness of their work; and then of their children, living in the exile of Indian children, at home. They explained that they meant Bangor; they were there with an aunt, receiving their education at the hands of a public school.

'It's five years since we saw them,' said Mrs. Estes, as they sat down to breakfast. 'Fred was only six when he went, and Laura was eight. They are eleven and thirteen now—only think! We hope they haven't forgotten us; but how can they remember? They are only children.'

And then she told him stories of the renewal of filial ties in India, after such absences, that made his blood run cold.

The breakfast woke a violent home-sickness in Tarvin. After a month at sea, two days of the

chance railroad meals between Calcutta and Rawut Junction, and a night at the rest-house, he was prepared to value the homely family meal, and the abundance of an American breakfast. They began with a water-melon, which did not help him to feel at home, because water-melons were next to an unknown luxury at Topaz, and when known, did not ripen in grocers' windows in the month of April. But the oatmeal brought him home again, and the steak and fried potatoes, the coffee and the hot brown pop-overs, with their beguiling yellow interiors, were reminders far too deep for tears. Mrs. Estes, enjoying his enjoyment, said they must have out the can of maple syrup, which had been sent them all the way from Bangor; and when the white-robed, silent-moving servant in the red turban came in with the waffles, she sent him for it. They were all very happy together over this, and said pleasant things about the American republic, while the punkah sang its droning song over their heads.

Tarvin had a map of Colorado in his pocket, of course, and when the talk, swinging to one part of the United States and another, worked westward, he spread it out on the breakfast-table, between the waffles and the steak, and showed them the position of Topaz. He explained to Estes how a new railroad, running north and south,

would make the town, and then he had to say affectionately what a wonderful town it really was, and to tell them about the buildings they had put up in the last twelve months, and how they had picked themselves up after the fire and gone to building the next morning. The fire had brought $100,000 into the town in insurance, he said. He exaggerated his exaggerations in unconscious defiance of the hugeness of the empty landscape lying outside the window. He did not mean to let the East engulf him or Topaz.

'We've got a young lady coming to us, I think, from your State,' interrupted Mrs. Estes, to whom all Western towns were alike. 'Wasn't it Topaz, Lucien? I'm almost sure it was.'

She rose and went to her work-basket for a letter, from which he confirmed her statement. 'Yes; Topaz. A Miss Sheriff. She comes to us from the Zenana Mission. Perhaps you know her?'

Tarvin's head bent over the map, which he was refolding. He answered shortly, 'Yes; I know her. When is she likely to be here?'

'Most any day now,' said Mrs. Estes.

'It seems a pity,' said Tarvin, 'to bring a young girl out here all alone, away from her friends—though I'm sure you'll be friends to her,' he added quickly, seeking Mrs. Estes' eyes.

'We shall try to keep her from getting home-sick,' said Mrs. Estes, with the motherly note in her voice. 'There's Fred and Laura home in Bangor, you know,' she added after a pause.

'That will be good of you,' said Tarvin, with more feeling than the interests of the Zenana Mission demanded.

'May I ask what your business is here?' inquired the missionary, as he passed his cup to his wife to be refilled. He had a rather formal habit of speech, and his words came muffled from the depths of a dense jungle of beard—iron-grey and unusually long. He had a benevolently grim face, a precise but friendly manner, and a good way of looking one in the eye which Tarvin liked. He was a man of decided opinions, particularly about the native races of India.

'Well, I'm prospecting,' Tarvin said, in a leisurely tone, glancing out of the window as if he expected to see Kate start up out of the desert.

'Ah! For gold?'

'W-e-l-l, yes; as much that as anything.'

Estes invited him out upon the veranda to smoke a cigar with him; his wife brought her sewing and sat with them; and as they smoked Tarvin asked him his questions about the Naulahka. Where was it? What was it? he inquired boldly. But he found that the missionary, though an American,

was no wiser about it than the lazy commercial travellers at the rest-house. He knew that it existed, but knew no man who had seen it save the Maharajah. Tarvin got at this through much talk about other things which interested him less; but he began to see an idea in the gold-mining to which the missionary persistently returned. Estes said he meant to engage in placer-mining, of course?

'Of course,' assented Tarvin.

'But you won't find much gold in the Amet River, I fancy. The natives have washed it spasmodically for hundreds of years. There is nothing to be found but what little silt washes down from the quartz rocks of the Gungra Hills. But you will be undertaking work on a large scale, I judge?' said the missionary, looking at him curiously.

'Oh, on a large scale, of course.'

Estes added that he supposed he had thought of the political difficulties in his way. He would have to get the consent of Colonel Nolan, and through him the consent of the British Government, if he meant to do anything serious in the State. In fact, he would have to get Colonel Nolan's consent to stay in Rhatore at all.

'Do you mean that I shall have to make it worth the British Government's while to let me alone?'

'Yes.'

'All right; I'll do that too.'

Mrs. Estes looked up quickly at her husband from under her eyebrows. Woman-like, she was thinking.

VIII

When a Lover hies abroad,
    Looking for his Love,
Azrael smiling sheathes his sword,
    Heaven smiles above.
Earth and Sea
His servants be,
And to lesser compass round,
That his Love be sooner found.
Chorus from Libretto to Naulahka.

TARVIN learned a number of things within the next week; and with what the West calls 'adaptability,' put on, with the complete suit of white linen which he donned the second day, an initiation into a whole new system of manners, usages, and traditions. They were not all agreeable, but they were all in a good cause, and he took pains to see that his new knowledge should not go for nothing, by securing an immediate presentation to the only man in the State of whom it was definitely assertable that he

had seen the object of his hopes. Estes willingly presented him to the Maharajah. The missionary and he rode one morning up the steep slopes of the rock on which stood the palace, itself rock-hewn. Passing through a deep archway, they entered a marble-flagged courtyard, and there found the Maharajah, attended by one ragged and out-at-elbow menial, discussing the points of a fox-terrier, which was lying before him on the flags.

Tarvin, unversed in kings, had expected a certain amount of state from one who did not pay his bills, and might be reasonably expected to cultivate reserve; but he was not prepared for the slovenly informality of a ruler in his everyday garb, released from the duty of behaving with restraint in the presence of a viceroy, nor for the picturesque mixture of dirt and decoration about the court. The Maharajah proved a large and amiable despot, brown and bush-bearded, arrayed in a gold-sprigged, green velvet dressing-gown, who appeared only too delighted to meet a man who had no connection with the Government of India, and who never mentioned the subject of money.

The disproportionate smallness of his hands and feet showed that the ruler of Gokral Seetarun came of the oldest blood in Rajputana; his fathers had fought hard and ridden far with sword-hilts and

stirrups that would hardly serve an English child. His face was bloated and sodden, and the dull eyes stared wearily above deep, rugged pouches. To Tarvin, accustomed to read the motives of Western men in their faces, there seemed to be neither fear nor desire in those eyes—only an everlasting weariness. It was like looking at an extinct volcano—a volcano that rumbled in good English.

Tarvin had a natural interest in dogs, and the keenest possible desire to ingratiate himself with the ruler of the State. As a king he considered him something of an imposture, but as a brother dog-fancier, and the lord of the Naulahka, he was to Tarvin more than a brother; that is to say, the brother of one's beloved. He spoke eloquently and to the point.

'Come again,' said the Maharajah, with a light of real interest in his eyes, as Estes, a little scandalised, drew off his guest. 'Come again this evening after dinner. You have come from new countries?'

His Majesty, later, carried away by the evening draught of opium, without which no Rajput can talk or think, taught this irreverent stranger, who told him tales of white men beyond the seas, the royal game of pachisi. They played it far into the night, in the marble-flagged courtyard, surrounded by green shutters from behind which

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Tarvin could hear, without turning his head, the whisper of watching women and the rustle of silken robes. The palace, he saw, was all eyes.

Next morning, at dawn, he found the King waiting at the head of the main street of his city for a certain notorious wild boar to come home. The game laws of Gokral Seetarun extended to the streets of walled towns, and the wild pig rooted unconcerned at night in the alley-ways. The pig came, and was dropped, at a hundred yards, by his Majesty's new Express rifle. It was a clean shot, and Tarvin applauded cordially. Had his Majesty the King ever seen a flying coin hit by a pistol bullet? The weary eyes brightened with childish delight. The King had not seen this feat, and had not the coin. Tarvin flung an American quarter skyward, and clipped it with his revolver as it fell. Thereupon the King begged him to do it again, which Tarvin, valuing his reputation, politely declined to do unless one of the court officials would set the example.

The King was himself anxious to try, and Tarvin threw the coin for him. The bullet whizzed unpleasantly close to Tarvin's ear, but the quarter on the grass was dented when he picked it up. The King liked Tarvin's dent as well as if it had been his own, and Tarvin was not the man to undeceive him.

The following morning the royal favour was

completely withdrawn, and it was not until he had conferred with the disconsolate drummers in the rest-house that Tarvin learned that Sitabhai had been indulging one of her queenly rages. On this he transferred himself and his abundant capacity for interesting men off-hand to Colonel Nolan, and made that weary white-haired man laugh as he had not laughed since he had been a subaltern over an account of the King's revolver practice. Tarvin shared his luncheon, and discovered from him in the course of the afternoon the true policy of the Government of India in regard to the State of Gokral Seetarun. The Government hoped to elevate it; but as the Maharajah would not pay for the means of civilisation, the progress was slow. Colonel Nolan's account of the internal policy of the palace, given with official caution, was absolutely different from the missionary's, which again differed entirely from the profane account of the men in the rest-house.

At twilight the Maharajah pursued Tarvin with a mounted messenger, for the favour of the royal countenance was restored, and he required the presence of the tall man who clipped coins in the air, told tales, and played pachisi. There was more than pachisi upon the board that night, and his Majesty the King grew pathetic, and confided to Tarvin a long and particular account of his own

and the State's embarrassments, which presented everything in a fourth new light. He concluded with an incoherent appeal to the President of the United States, on whose illimitable powers and far-reaching authority Tarvin dwelt, with a patriotism extended for the moment to embrace the nation to which Topaz belonged. For many reasons he did not conceive that this was an auspicious time to open negotiations for the transfer of the Naulahka. The Maharajah would have given away half his kingdom, and appealed to the Resident in the morning.

The next day, and many succeeding days, brought to the door of the rest-house, where Tarvin was still staying, a procession of rainbow-clad Orientals, ministers of the court each one, who looked with contempt on the waiting commercial travellers, and deferentially made themselves known to Tarvin, whom they warned in fluent and stilted English against trusting anybody except themselves. Each confidence wound up with, 'And I am your true friend, sir'; and each man accused his fellows to the stranger of every crime against the State, or ill-will toward the Government of India, that it had entered his own brain to conceive.

Tarvin could only faintly conjecture what all this meant. It seemed to him no extraordinary mark of court favour to play pachisi with the King,

and the mazes of Oriental diplomacy were dark to him. The ministers were equally at a loss to understand him. He had walked in upon them from out the sky-line, utterly self-possessed, utterly fearless, and, so far as they could see, utterly disinterested; the greater reason, therefore, for suspecting that he was a veiled emissary of the Government, whose plans they could not fathom. That he was barbarously ignorant of everything pertaining to the Government of India only confirmed their belief. It was enough for them to know that he went to the King in secret, was closeted with him for hours, and possessed, for the time being, the royal ear.

These smooth-voiced, stately, mysterious strangers filled Tarvin with weariness and disgust, and he took out his revenge upon the commercial travellers, to whom he sold stock in his land and improvement company between their visits. The yellow-coated man, as his first friend and adviser, he allowed to purchase a very few shares in the 'Lingering Lode,' on the dead quiet. It was before the days of the gold boom in Lower Bengal, and there was still faith in the land.

These transactions took him back in fancy to Topaz, and made him long for some word about the boys at home, from whom he had absolutely cut himself off by this secret expedition, in which

he was playing, necessarily alone, for the high stake common to them both. He would have given all the rupees in his pocket at any moment for a sight of the *Topaz Telegram*, or even for a look at a Denver daily. What was happening to his mines —to the 'Mollie K.,' which was being worked on a lease; to the 'Mascot,' which was the subject of a legal dispute; to the 'Lingering Lode,' where they had been on the point of striking it very rich when he left; and to his 'Garfield' claim, which Fibby Winks had jumped? What had become of the mines of all his friends, of their cattle-ranches, of their deals? What, in fine, had become of Colorado and of the United States of America? They might have legislated silver out of existence at Washington, for all he knew, and turned the republic into a monarchy at the old stand.

His single resource from these pangs was his visits to the house of the missionary, where they talked Bangor, Maine, in the United States. To that house he knew that every day was bringing nearer the little girl he had come half way round the world to keep in sight.

In the splendour of a yellow and violet morning, ten days after his arrival, he was roused from his sleep by a small, shrill voice in the veranda demanding the immediate attendance of the new

Englishman. The Maharaj Kunwar, heir-apparent to the throne of Gokral Seetarun, a wheat-coloured child, aged nine, had ordered his miniature court, which was held quite distinct from his father's, to equip his C-spring barouche, and to take him to the rest-house.

Like his jaded father, the child required amusement. All the women of the palace had told him that the new Englishman made the King laugh. The Maharaj Kunwar could speak English much better than his father—French, too, for the matter of that—and he was anxious to show off his accomplishments to a court whose applause he had not yet commanded.

Tarvin obeyed the voice because it was a child's, and came out to find an apparently empty barouche, and an escort of ten gigantic troopers.

'How do you do? *Comment vous portez-vous?* I am the prince of this State. I am the Maharaj Kunwar. Some day I shall be king. Come for a drive with me.'

A tiny mittened hand was extended in greeting. The mittens were of the crudest magenta wool, with green stripes at the wrist; but the child was robed in stiff gold brocade from head to foot, and in his turban was set an aigrette of diamonds six inches high, while emeralds in a thick cluster fell over his eyebrow. Under all this glitter the dark

onyx eyes looked out, and they were full of pride and of the loneliness of childhood.

Tarvin obediently took his seat in the barouche. He was beginning to wonder whether he should ever wonder at anything again.

'We will drive beyond the race-course on the railway road,' said the child. 'Who are you?' he asked, softly laying his hand on Tarvin's wrist.

'Just a man, sonny.'

The face looked very old under the turban, for those born to absolute power, or those who have never known a thwarted desire, and reared under the fiercest sun in the world, age even more swiftly than the other children of the East, who are self-possessed men when they should be bashful babes.

'They say you come here to see things.'

'That's true,' said Tarvin.

'When I'm king I shall allow nobody to come here—not even the viceroy.'

'That leaves me out,' remarked Tarvin, laughing.

'You shall come,' returned the child, measuredly, 'if you make me laugh. Make me laugh now.'

'Shall I, little fellow? Well—there was once—I wonder what *would* make a child laugh in this country. I've never seen one do it yet. W-h-e-w!' Tarvin gave a low, long-drawn whistle. 'What's that over there, my boy?'

A little puff of dust rose very far down the road. It was made by swiftly moving wheels, consequently it had nothing to do with the regular traffic of the State.

'That is what I came out to see,' said the Maharaj Kunwar. 'She will make me well. My father, the Maharajah, said so. I am not well now.' He turned imperiously to a favourite groom at the back of the carriage. 'Soor Singh' —he spoke in the vernacular—'what is it when I become without sense? I have forgotten the English.' The groom leaned forward.

'Heaven-born, I do not remember,' he said.

'Now I remember,' said the child suddenly. 'Mrs. Estes says it is fits. What are fits?'

Tarvin put his hand tenderly on the child's shoulder, but his eyes were following the dust-cloud. 'Let us hope she'll cure them, anyway, young 'un, whatever they are. But who is *she*?'

'I do not know the name, but she will make me well. See! My father has sent a carriage to meet her.'

An empty barouche was drawn up by the side of the road as the rickety, straining mail-cart drew nearer, with frantic blasts upon a battered key-bugle.

'It's better than a bullock-cart anyway,' said

Tarvin to himself, standing up in the carriage, for he was beginning to choke.

'Young man, don't you know who she is?' he asked huskily again.

'She was sent,' said the Maharaj Kunwar.

'Her name's Kate,' said Tarvin in his throat, 'and don't you forget it.' Then to himself in a contented whisper, '*Kate!*'

The child waved his hand to his escort, who, dividing, lined either side of the road, with all the ragged bravery of irregular cavalry. The mail-carriage halted, and Kate, crumpled, dusty, dishevelled from her long journey, and red-eyed from lack of sleep, drew back the shutters of the palanquin-like carriage, and stepped dazed into the road. Her numbed limbs would have doubled under her, but Tarvin, leaping from the barouche, caught her to him, regardless of the escort and of the calm-eyed child in the golden drapery, who was shouting, 'Kate! Kate!'

'Run along home, bub,' said Tarvin. 'Well, Kate?'

But Kate had only her tears for him and a gasping 'You! You! *You!*'

IX

We meet in an evil land,
  That is near to the gates of Hell—
I wait for thy command,
To serve, to speed, or withstand;
  And thou sayest I do not well!

Oh, love, the flowers so red
  Be only blossoms of flame,
The earth is full of the dead,
The new-killed, restless dead,
There is danger beneath and overhead;
  And I guard at thy gates in fear
    Of peril and jeopardy,
  Of words thou canst not hear,
    Of signs thou canst not see—
  And thou sayest 't is ill that I came?

In Shadowland.

TEARS stood again in Kate's eyes as she uncoiled her hair before the mirror in the room Mrs. Estes had prepared against her coming—tears of vexation. It was an old story with her that the world wants nothing done for it, and visits

with displeasure those who must prod up its lazy content. But in landing at Bombay she had supposed herself at the end of outside hindrances and obstacles; what was now to come would belong to the wholesome difficulties of real work. And here was Nick!

She had made the journey from Topaz in a long mood of exaltation. She was launched; it made her giddy and happy, like the boy's first taste of the life of men. She was free at last. No one could stop her. Nothing could keep her from the life to which she had promised herself. A little moment and she might stretch forth her hand and lay it fast upon her work. A few days and she should stoop eye to eye above the pain that had called to her across seas. In her dreams piteous hands of women were raised in prayer to her, and moist, sick palms were laid in hers. The steady urge of the ship was too slow for her; she counted the throbs of the screw. Standing far in the prow, with wind-blown hair, straining her eyes toward India, her spirit went longingly forth toward those to whom she was going; and her life seemed to release itself from her, and sped far, far over the waves, until it reached them and gave itself to them. For a moment, as she set foot on land, she trembled with a revulsion of feeling. She drew near her work; but was it for her?

This old fear, which had gone doubtfully with her purpose from the beginning, she put behind her with a stern refusal to question there. She was for so much of her work as heaven would let her do; and she went forward with a new, strong humble impulse of devotion filling and uplifting her.

It was in this mood that she stepped out of the coach at Rhatore into Tarvin's arms.

She did justice to the kindness that had brought him over all these leagues, but she heartily wished that he had not come. The existence of a man who loved her, and for whom she could do nothing, was a sad and troubling fact enough fourteen thousand miles away. Face to face with it, alone in India, it enlarged itself unbearably, and thrust itself between her and all her hopes of bringing serious help to others. Love literally did not seem to her the most important thing in the world at that moment, and something else did; but that didn't make Nick's trouble unimportant, or prevent it, while she braided her hair, from getting in the way of her thoughts. On the morrow she was to enter upon the life which she meant should be a help to those whom it could reach, and here she was thinking of Nicholas Tarvin.

It was because she foresaw that she would keep on thinking of him that she wished him away.

He was the tourist wandering about behind the devotee in the cathedral at prayers; he was the other thought. In his person he represented and symbolised the life she had left behind; much worse, he represented a pain she could not heal. It was not with the haunting figure of love attendant that one carried out large purposes. Nor was it with a divided mind that men conquered cities. The intent with which she was aflame needed all of her. She could not divide herself even with Nick. And yet it was good of him to come, and like him. She knew that he had not come merely in pursuit of a selfish hope; it was as he had said—he couldn't sleep nights, knowing what might befall her. That was *really* good of him.

Mrs. Estes had invited Tarvin to breakfast the day before, when Kate was not expected, but Tarvin was not the man to decline an invitation at the last moment on that account, and he faced Kate across the breakfast-table next morning with a smile which evoked an unwilling smile from her. In spite of a sleepless night she was looking very fresh and pretty in the white muslin frock which had replaced her travelling dress, and when he found himself alone with her after breakfast on the veranda (Mrs. Estes having gone to look after the morning affairs of a housekeeper, and Estes

having betaken himself to his mission-school, inside the city walls), he began to make her his compliments upon the cool white, unknown to the West. But Kate stopped him.

'Nick,' she said, facing him, 'will you do something for me?'

Seeing her much in earnest, Tarvin attempted the parry humorous; but she broke in—

'No; it is something I want very much, Nick. Will you do it for me?'

'Is there anything I wouldn't do for you?' he asked seriously.

'I don't know; this, perhaps. But you must do it.'

'What is it?'

'Go away.'

He shook his head.

'But you must.'

'Listen, Kate,' said Tarvin, thrusting his hands deep into the big pockets of his white coat; 'I can't. You don't know the place you've come to. Ask me the same question a week hence. I won't agree to go. But I'll agree to talk it over with you then.'

'I know now everything that counts,' she answered. 'I want to do what I've come here for. I shan't be able to do it if you stay. You understand, don't you, Nick? Nothing can change that.'

'Yes, it can. *I* can. I'll behave.'

'You needn't tell me you'll be kind. I know it. But even you can't be kind enough to help hindering me. Believe that, now, Nick, and go. It isn't that I want you to go, you know.'

'Oh!' observed Tarvin, with a smile.

'Well—you know what I mean,' returned Kate, her face unrelaxed.

'Yes; I know. But if I'm good it won't matter. I know that too. You'll see,' he said gently. 'Awful journey, isn't it?'

'You promised me not to take it.'

'I didn't take it,' returned Tarvin, smiling, and spreading a seat for her in the hammock, while he took one of the deep veranda chairs himself. He crossed his legs and fixed the white pith helmet he had lately adopted on his knee. 'I came round the other way on purpose.'

'What do you mean?' asked Kate, dropping tentatively into the hammock.

'San Francisco and Yokohama, of course. You told me not to follow you.'

'*Nick!*' She gathered into the single syllable the reproach and reproof, the liking and despair, with which the least and the greatest of his audacities alike affected her.

Tarvin had nothing to say for once, and in the pause that fell she had time to reassure herself of her abhorrence of his presence here, and time to

still the impulse of pride, which told her that it was good to be followed over half the earth's girdle for love, and the impulse of admiration for that fine devotion—time, above all—for this was worst and most shameful—to scorn the sense of loneliness and far-awayness that came rolling in on her out of the desert like a cloud, and made the protecting and home-like presence of the man she had known in the other life seem for a moment sweet and desirable.

'Come, Kate, you didn't expect me to stay at home, and let you find your way out here to take the chances of this old sand-heap, did you? It would be a cold day when I let you come to Gokral Seetarun all by your lone, little girl—freezing cold, I've thought since I've been here, and seen what sort of camp it is.'

'Why didn't you tell me you were coming?'

'You didn't seem particularly interested in what I did, when I last saw you.'

'Nick! I didn't want you to come here, and I had to come myself.'

'Well, you've come. I hope you'll like it,' said he, grimly.

'Is it so bad?' she asked. 'Not that I shall mind.'

'Bad! Do you remember Mastodon?'

Mastodon was one of those Western towns

which have their future behind them—a city without an inhabitant, abandoned and desolate.

'Take Mastodon for deadness, and fill it with ten Leadvilles for wickedness—Leadville the first year—and you've got a tenth of it.'

He went on to offer her an exposition of the history, politics, and society of Gokral Seetarun, from his own point of view, dealing with the dead East from the standpoint of the living West, and dealing with it vividly. It was a burning theme, and it was a happiness to him to have a listener who could understand his attitude, even if she could not entirely sympathise with it. His tone besought her to laugh at it with him a little, if only a little, and Kate consented to laugh; but she said it all seemed to her more mournful than amusing.

Tarvin could agree to this readily enough, but he told her that he laughed to avoid weeping. It made him tired to see the fixedness, the apathy, and lifelessness of this rich and populous world, which should be up and stirring by rights — trading, organising, inventing, building new towns, making the old ones keep up with the procession, laying new railroads, going in for fresh enterprises, and keeping things humming.

'They've got resources enough,' he said. 'It isn't as if they had the excuse that the country's poor. It's a good country. Move the population

of a lively Colorado town to Rhatore, set up a good local paper, organise a board of trade, and let the world know what there is here, and we'd have a boom in six months that would shake the empire. But what's the use? They're dead. They're mummies. They're wooden images. There isn't enough real, old-fashioned downright rustle and razzle-dazzle and "git up and git" in Gokral Seetarun to run a milk-cart.'

'Yes, yes,' she murmured, half to herself, with illumined eyes. 'It's for that I've come.'

'How's that?'

'Because they are *not* like us,' she answered, turning her lustrous face on him. 'If they were clever, if they were wise, what could we do for them? It is because they are lost, stumbling, foolish creatures that they need us.' She heaved a deep sigh. 'It is good to be here.'

'It's good to have you,' said Tarvin.

She started. 'Don't say such things any more, please, Nick,' she said.

'Oh, well!' he groaned.

'But it's this way, Nick,' she said earnestly, but kindly. 'I don't belong to such things any more—not even to the possibility of them. Think of me as a nun. Think of me as having renounced all such happiness, and all other kinds of happiness but my work.'

'H'm. May I smoke?' At her nod he lighted a cigar. 'I'm glad I'm here for the ceremony.'

'What ceremony?' she asked.

'Seeing you take the veil. But you won't take it.'

'Why not?'

He grumbled inarticulately over his cigar a moment. Then he looked up. 'Because I've got big wealth that says you won't. I know you, I know Rhatore, and I know——'

'What? Who?'

'Myself,' he said, looking up.

She clasped her hands in her lap. 'Nick,' she said, leaning toward him, 'you know I like you. I like you too well to let you go on thinking—you talk of not being able to sleep. How do you suppose I can sleep with the thought always by me that you are laying up a pain and disappointment for yourself—one that I can't help, unless I can help it by begging you to go away now. I do beg it. *Please* go!'

Tarvin pulled at his cigar musingly for some seconds. 'Dear girl, I'm not afraid.'

She sighed, and turned her face away toward the desert. 'I wish you were,' she said hopelessly.

'Fear is not for legislators,' he retorted oracularly.

She turned back to him with a sudden motion. 'Legislators! O Nick, are you——?'

'I'm afraid I am—by a majority of 1518.' He handed her the cable-despatch.

'Poor father!'

'Well, I don't know.'

'Oh! Well, I congratulate you, of course.'

'Thanks.'

'But I'm not sure it will be a good thing for you.'

'Yes; that's the way it had struck me. If I spend my whole term out here, like as not my constituents won't be in a mood to advance my political career when I get back.'

'All the more reason——'

'No; the more reason for fixing the real thing first. I can make myself solid in politics any time. But there isn't but one time to make myself solid with you, Kate. It's here. It's now.' He rose and bent over her. 'Do you think I can postpone that, dear? I can adjourn it from day to day, and I do cheerfully, and you shan't hear any more of it until you're ready to. But you like me, Kate. I know that. And I—well, I like you. There isn't but one end to that sort of thing.' He took her hand. 'Good-bye. I'll come and take you for a look at the city to-morrow.'

Kate gazed long after his retreating figure, and

then took herself into the house, where a warm, healthful chat with Mrs. Estes, chiefly about the children at Bangor, helped her to a sane view of the situation she must face with the reappearance of Tarvin. She saw that he meant to stay, and if she didn't mean to go, it was for her to find the brave way of adjusting the fact to her hopes. His perversity complicated an undertaking which she had never expected to find simple in itself; and it was finally only because she trusted all that he said implicitly that she was able to stay herself upon his promise to 'behave.' Liberally interpreted, this really meant much from Tarvin; perhaps it meant all that she need ask.

When all was said, there remained the impulse to flight; but she was ashamed to find, when he came in the morning, that a formidable pang of home-sickness drew her toward him, and made his definite and cheerful presence a welcome sight. Mrs. Estes had been kind. The two women had made friends, and found each other's heart with instant sympathy. But a home face was different, and perhaps Nick's was even more different. At all events, she willingly let him carry out his plan of showing her the city.

In their walk about it Tarvin did not spare her the advantage of his ten days' residence in Rhatore preceding her coming; he made himself her guide,

and stood on rocks overlooking things and spouted his second-hand history with an assurance that the oldest Political Resident might have envied. He was interested in the problems of the State, if not responsible for their solution. Was he not a member of a governing body? His ceaseless and fruitful curiosity about all new things had furnished him, in ten days, with much learning about Rhatore and Gokral Seetarun, enabling him to show to Kate, with eyes scarcely less fresh than her own, the wonders of the narrow, sand-choked streets, where the footfalls of camels and men alike fell dead. They lingered by the royal menagerie of starved tigers, and the cages of the two tame hunting leopards, hooded like hawks, that slept, and yawned, and scratched on their two bedsteads by the main gate of the city; and he showed her the ponderous door of the great gate itself, studded with foot-long spikes against the attacks of that living battering-ram, the elephant. He led her through the long lines of dark shops planted in and among the ruins of palaces, whose builders had been long since forgotten, and about the straggling barracks, past knots of fantastically attired soldiers, who hung their day's marketing from the muzzle of the Brown Bess or flint-lock; and then he showed her the mausoleum of the kings of Gokral Seetarun, under the shadow of the

great temple where the children of the Sun and Moon went to worship, and where the smooth, black stone bull glared across the main square at the cheap bronze statue of Colonel Nolan's predecessor—an offensively energetic and very plain Yorkshireman. Lastly, they found beyond the walls the clamouring caravansary of traders by the gateway of the Three Gods, whence the caravans of camels filed out with their burdens of glistening rock-salt for the railroad, and where by day and by night cloaked and jaw-bound riders of the desert, speaking a tongue that none could understand, rode in from God knows what fastness beyond the white hillocks of Jeysulmir.

As they went along, Tarvin asked her about Topaz. How had she left it? How was the dear old town looking? Kate said she had only left it three days after his departure.

'Three days! Three days is a long time in the life of a growing town.'

Kate smiled. 'I didn't see any changes,' she said.

'No? Peters was talking about breaking ground for his new brick saloon on G Street the day after I left; Parsons was getting in a new dynamo for the city's electric light plant; they were just getting to work on the grading of Massachusetts Avenue, and they had planted the first tree in my twenty-acre plot. Kearney, the

druggist, was putting in a plate-glass window, and I shouldn't wonder if Maxim had got his new post-office boxes from Meriden before you left. Didn't you notice?'

Kate shook her head. 'I was thinking of something else just then.'

'Pshaw! I'd like to know. But no matter. I suppose it *is* asking too much to expect a woman to play her own hand, and keep the run of improvements in the town,' he mused. 'Women aren't built that way. And yet I used to run a political canvass and a business or two, and something else in that town.' He glanced humorously at Kate, who lifted a warning hand. 'Forbidden subject? All right. I *will* be good. But they had to get up early in the morning to do anything to it without letting me into it. What did your father and mother say at the last?'

'Don't speak of that,' begged Kate.

'Well, I won't.'

'I wake up at night, and think of mother. It's dreadful. At the last I suppose I should have stayed behind and shirked if some one had said the right word—or the wrong one—as I got on board the train, and waved my handkerchief to them.'

'Good heaven! Why didn't I stay!' he groaned.

'You couldn't have said it, Nick,' she told him quietly.

'You mean your father could. Of course he could, and if he had happened to be some one else he would. When I think of that I want to——!'

'Don't say anything against father, please,' she said, with a tightening of the lips.

'Oh, dear child!' he murmured contritely, 'I didn't mean that. But I have to say something against somebody. Give me somebody to curse, and I'll be quiet.'

'Nick!'

'Well, I'm not a block of wood,' he growled.

'No; you are only a very foolish man.'

Tarvin smiled. 'Now you're shouting.'

She asked him about the Maharaj Kunwar, to change the subject, and Tarvin told her that he was a little brick. But he added that the society of Rhatore wasn't all as good.

'You ought to see Sitabhai!'

He went on to tell her about the Maharajah and the people of the palace with whom she would come in contact. They talked of the strange mingling of impassiveness and childishness in the people, which had already impressed Kate, and spoke of their primitive passions and simple ideas —simple as the massive strength of the Orient is simple.

'They aren't what we should call cultured. They don't know Ibsen a little bit, and they don't go in for Tolstoi for sour apples,' said Tarvin, who did not read three newspapers a day at Topaz for nothing. 'If they really knew the modern young woman, I suppose her life wouldn't be worth an hour's purchase. But they've got some rattling good old-fashioned ideas, all the same—the sort I used to hear once upon a time at my dear old mother's knee, away back in the State of Maine. Mother believed in marriage, you know; and that's where she agreed with me and with the fine old-style natives of India. The venerable, ramshackle, tumble-down institution of matrimony is still in use here, you know.'

'But I never said I sympathised with Nora, Nick,' exclaimed Kate, leaping all the chasms of connection.

'Well, then, that's where you are solid with the Indian Empire. The *Doll's House* glanced right off this blessed old-timey country. You wouldn't know where it had been hit.'

'But I don't agree with all your ideas either,' she felt bound to add.

'I can think of one,' retorted Tarvin, with a shrewd smile. 'But I'll convert you to my views there.'

Kate stopped short in the street along which

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

they were walking. 'I trusted you, Nick!' she said reproachfully.

He stopped, and gazed ruefully at her for a moment. 'O Lord!' he groaned. 'I trusted myself! But I'm always thinking of it. What can you expect? But I tell you what, Kate, this shall be the end—last, final, ultimate. I'm done. From this out I'm a reformed man. I don't promise not to think, and I'll have to go on feeling, just the same. But I'll be quiet. Shake on it.' He offered his hand, and Kate took it.

They walked on for some moments in silence until Tarvin said mournfully, 'You didn't see Heckler just before you came away, did you?'

She shook her head.

'No; Jim and you never did get along much together. But I wish I knew what he's thinking about me. Didn't hear any rumour, any report, going around about what had become of me, I suppose?'

'They thought in town that you had gone to San Francisco to see some of the Western directors of the Colorado and California Central, I think. They thought that because the conductor of your train brought back word that you said you were going to Alaska, and they didn't believe that. I wish you had a better reputation for truth-telling at Topaz, Nick.'

'So do I, Kate; so do I,' exclaimed Tarvin heartily. 'But if I had, how would I ever get the right thing believed? That's just what I wanted them to think—that I was looking after their interests. But where would I be if I had sent that story back? They would have had me working a land-grab in Chili before night. That reminds me—don't mention that I'm here in writing home, please. Perhaps they'll figure that out, too, by the rule of contraries, if I give them the chance. But I don't want to give them the chance.'

'I'm not likely to mention it,' said Kate, flushing.

A moment later she recurred to the subject of her mother. In the yearning for home that came upon her anew in the midst of all the strangeness through which Tarvin was taking her, the thought of her mother, patient, alone, looking for some word from her, hurt her as if for the first time. The memory was for the moment intolerable to her; but when Tarvin asked her why she had come at all if she felt that way, she answered with the courage of better moments—'Why do men go to war?'

Kate saw little of Tarvin during the next few days. Mrs. Estes made her known at the palace, and she had plenty to occupy her mind and heart. There she stepped bewilderedly into a land where

it was always twilight—a labyrinth of passages, courtyards, stairs, and hidden ways, all overflowing with veiled women, who peered at her and laughed behind her back, or childishly examined her dress, her helmet, and her gloves. It seemed impossible that she should ever know the smallest part of the vast warren, or distinguish one pale face from another in the gloom, as the women led her through long lines of lonely chambers where the wind sighed alone under the glittering ceilings, to hanging gardens two hundred feet above the level of the ground, but still jealously guarded by high walls, and down again by interminable stairways, from the glare and the blue of the flat roofs to silent subterranean chambers hewn against the heat of the summer sixty feet into the heart of the living rock. At every step she found women and children, and yet more women and children. The palace was reported to hold within its walls four thousand living, and no man knew how many buried, dead.

There were many women—how many she did not know—worked upon by intrigues she could not comprehend, who refused her ministrations absolutely. They were not ill, they said, and the touch of the white woman meant pollution. Others there were who thrust their children before her and bade her bring colour and strength back

to these pale buds born in the darkness; and terrible, fierce-eyed girls who leaped upon her out of the dark, overwhelming her with passionate complaints that she did not and dared not understand. Monstrous and obscene pictures glared at her from the walls of the little rooms, and the images of shameless gods mocked her from their greasy niches above the doorways. The heat and the smell of cooking, faint fumes of incense, and the indescribable taint of overcrowded humanity, caught her by the throat. But what she heard and what she guessed sickened her more than any visible horror. Plainly it was one thing to be stirred to generous action by a vivid recital of the state of the women of India, another to face the unutterable fact in the isolation of the women's apartments of the palace of Rhatore.

Tarvin meanwhile was going about spying out the land on a system which he had contrived for himself. It was conducted on the principle of exhaustion of the possibilities in the order of their importance—every movement which he made having the directest, though not always the most obvious, relation to the Naulahka.

He was free to come and go through the royal gardens, where innumerable and very seldom paid gardeners fought with water-skin and well-wheel against the destroying heat of the desert. He was

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

welcomed in the Maharajah's stables, where eight hundred horses were littered down nightly, and was allowed to watch them go out for their morning exercise, four hundred at a time, in a whirlwind of dust. In the outer courts of the palace it was open to him to come and go as he chose—to watch the toilets of the elephants when the Maharajah went out in state, to laugh with the quarter-guard, and to unearth dragon-headed, snake-throated pieces of artillery, invented by native artificers, who, here in the East, had dreamed of the *mitrailleuse*. But Kate could go where he was forbidden to venture. He knew the life of a white woman to be as safe in Rhatore as in Topaz; but on the first day she disappeared, untroubled and unquestioning, behind the darkness of the veiled door leading to the apartments of the women of the palace, he found his hand going instinctively to the butt of his revolver.

The Maharajah was an excellent friend, and no bad hand at pachisi; but as Tarvin sat opposite him, half an hour later, he reflected that he should not recommend the Maharajah's life for insurance if anything happened to his love while she remained in those mysterious chambers from which the only sign that came to the outer world was a ceaseless whispering and rustling. When Kate came out, the little Maharaj Kunwar clinging to her hand,

her face was white and drawn, and her eyes full of indignant tears. She had seen.

Tarvin hastened to her side, but she put him from her with the imperious gesture that women know in deep moments, and fled to Mrs. Estes.

Tarvin felt himself for the moment rudely thrust out of her life. The Maharaj Kunwar found him that evening pacing up and down the veranda of the rest-house, almost sorry that he had not shot the Maharajah for bringing that look into Kate's eyes. With deep-drawn breath he thanked his God that he was there to watch and defend, and, if need were, to carry off, at the last, by force. With a shudder he fancied her here alone, save for the distant care of Mrs. Estes.

'I have brought this for Kate,' said the child, descending from his carriage cautiously, with a parcel that filled both his arms. 'Come with me there.'

Nothing loth, Tarvin came, and they drove over to the house of the missionary.

'All the people in my palace,' said the child as they went, 'say that she's your Kate.'

'I'm glad they know that much,' muttered Tarvin to himself savagely. 'What's this you have got for her?' he asked the Maharaj aloud, laying his hand on the parcel.

'It is from my mother, the Queen—the real

Queen, you know, because I am the Prince. There is a message, too, that I must not tell.' He began to whisper, childlike, to himself, to keep the message in mind. Kate was in the veranda when they arrived, and her face brightened a little at sight of the child.

'Tell my guard to stand back out of the garden. Go, and wait in the road.'

The carriage and troopers withdrew. The child, still holding Tarvin's hand, held out the parcel to Kate.

'It is from my mother,' he said. 'You have seen her. This man need not go. He is'—he hesitated a little—'of your heart, is he not? Your speech is his speech.'

Kate flushed, but did not attempt to set the child right. What could she say?

'And I am to tell this,' he continued, 'first before everything, till you quite understand.' He spoke hesitatingly, translating out of his own vernacular as he went on, and drawing himself to his full height, as he cleared the cluster of emeralds from his brow. 'My mother, the Queen—the real Queen—says, "I was three months at this work. It is for you, because I have seen your face. That which has been made may be unravelled against our will, and a gipsy's hands are always picking. For the love of the gods look to it that

a gipsy unravels nothing that I have made, for it is my life and soul to me. Protect this work of mine that comes from me—a cloth nine years upon the loom." I know more English than my mother,' said the child, dropping into his ordinary speech.

Kate opened the parcel, and unrolled a crude yellow and black comforter, with a violent crimson fringe, clumsily knitted. With such labours the queens of Gokral Seetarun were wont to beguile their leisure.

'That is all,' said the child. But he seemed unwilling to go. There was a lump in Kate's throat, as she handled the pitiful gift. Without warning the child, never loosening for a moment his grip on Tarvin's hand, began to repeat the message word by word, his little fingers tightening on Tarvin's fist as he went on.

'Say I am very grateful indeed,' said Kate, a little puzzled, and not too sure of her voice.

'That was not the answer,' said the child; and he looked appealingly at his tall friend, the new Englishman.

The idle talk of the commercial travellers in the veranda of the rest-house flashed through Tarvin's mind. He took a quick pace forward, and laid his hand on Kate's shoulder, whispering huskily—

'Can't you see what it means? It's the boy—the cloth nine years on the loom.'

'But what can I do?' cried Kate, bewildered.

'Look after him. Keep on looking after him. You are quick enough in most things. Sitabhai wants his life. See that she doesn't get it.'

Kate began to understand a little. Everything was possible in that awful palace, even child-murder. She had already guessed the hate that lives between childless and mother queens. The Maharaj Kunwar stood motionless in the twilight, twinkling in his jewelled robes.

'Shall I say it again?' he asked.

'No, no, no, child! No!' she cried, flinging herself on her knees before him, and snatching his little figure to her breast, with a sudden access of tenderness and pity. 'O Nick! what shall we do in this horrible country?' She began to cry.

'Ah!' said the Maharaj, utterly unmoved, 'I was to go when I saw that you cried.' He lifted up his voice for the carriage and troopers, and departed, leaving the shabby comforter on the floor.

Kate was sobbing in the half darkness. Neither Mrs. Estes nor her husband was within just then. That little 'we' of hers went through Tarvin with a sweet and tingling ecstasy. He stooped and took her in his arms, and for that which followed Kate did not rebuke him.

'We'll pull through together, little girl,' he whispered to the shaken head on his shoulder.

X

Ye know the Hundred Danger Time when gay with paint
and flowers,
Your household gods are bribed to help the bitter, helpless
hours;
Ye know the worn and rotten mat whereon your daughter
lies,
Ye know the *Sootak*-room unclean, the cell wherein she dies.

Dies with the babble in her ear of midwife's muttered charm,
Dies, spite young life that strains to stay, the suckling on
her arm—
Dies in the four-fold heated room, parched by the Birth-
Fire's breath—
Foredoomed, ye say, lest anguish lack, to haunt her home
in death.

A Song of the Women.

'DEAR FRIEND—That was very unkind of you, and you have made my life harder. I know I was weak. The child upset me. But I must do what I came for, and I want you to strengthen me, Nick, not hinder me. Don't come for a few days, please. I need all I am or

hope to be for the work I see opening here. I think I can really do some good. Let me, please.

'Kate.'

Tarvin read fifty different meanings into this letter, received the following morning, and read them out again. At the end of his conjectures he could be sure only of one thing—that in spite of that moment's weakness, Kate was fixed upon her path. He could not yet prevail against her steadfast gentleness, and perhaps it would be better not to try. Talks in the veranda, and sentinel-like prowlings about her path when she went to the palace, were pleasant enough, but he had not come to Rhatore to tell her that he loved her. Topaz, in whose future the other half of his heart was bound up, knew that secret long ago, and—Topaz was waiting for the coming of the Three C.'s, even as Nick was waiting on Kate's comings and goings. The girl was unhappy, overstrained, and despairing, but since—he thanked God always—he was at hand to guard her from the absolute shock of evil fate, she might well be left for the moment to Mrs. Estes' comfort and sympathy.

She had already accomplished something in the guarded courts of the women's quarters, for the Maharaj Kunwar's mother had entrusted her only son's life to her care (who could help loving and

trusting Kate?); but for his own part, what had he done for Topaz beyond—he looked toward the city—playing pachisi with the Maharajah? The low morning sun flung the shadow of the rest-house before him. The commercial travellers came out one by one, gazed at the walled bulk of Rhatore, and cursed it. Tarvin mounted his horse, of which much more hereafter, and ambled toward the city to pay his respects to the Maharajah. It was through him, if through any one, that he must possess himself of the Naulahka; he had been anxiously studying him, and shrewdly measuring the situation, and he now believed that he had formed a plan through which he might hope to make himself solid with the Maharajah—a plan which, whether it brought him the Naulahka or not, would at least allow him the privilege of staying at Rhatore. This privilege certain broad hints of Colonel Nolan's had seemed to Tarvin of late plainly to threaten, and it had become clear to him that he must at once acquire a practical and publishable object for his visit, if he had to rip up the entire State to find it. To stay, he must do something in particular. What he had found to do was particular enough; it should be done forthwith, and it should bring him first the Naulahka, and then—if he was at all the man he took himself for—Kate!

As he approached the gates he saw Kate, in a brown habit, riding with Mrs. Estes out of the missionary's garden.

'You needn't be afraid, dear. I shan't bother you,' he said to himself, smiling at the dust-cloud rising behind her, as he slackened his pace. 'But I wonder what's taking you out so early.'

The misery within the palace walls which had sent her half weeping to Mrs. Estes represented only a phase of the work for which Kate had come. If the wretchedness was so great under the shadow of the throne, what must the common folk endure? Kate was on her way to the hospital.

'There is only one native doctor at the hospital,' Mrs. Estes was saying, as they went along, 'and, of course, he's only a native; that is to say, he is idle.'

'How can any one be idle here?' her companion cried, as the stored heat from under the city gates beat across their temples.

'Every one grows idle so soon in Rhatore,' returned Mrs. Estes, with a little sigh, thinking of Lucien's high hopes and strenuous endeavours, long since subdued to a mild apathy.

Kate sat her horse with the assured seat of a Western girl who has learned to ride and to walk at the same time. Her well-borne little figure had advantages on horseback. The glow of

resolve lighting her simply framed face at the moment lent it a spiritual beauty; and she was warmed by the consciousness that she drew near her purpose and the goal of two years' working and dreaming. As they rounded a curve in the main street of the city, a crowd was seen waiting at the foot of a flight of red sandstone steps rising to the platform of a whitewashed house three storeys in height, on which appeared the sign, 'State Dispensary.' The letters leaned against one another, and drooped down over each side of the door.

A sense of the unreality of it all came over Kate as she surveyed the crowd of women, clad in vermilion, dull-red, indigo, saffron, blue, pink, and turquoise garments of raw silk. Almost every woman held a child on her hip, and a low wailing cry rose up as Kate drew rein. The women clustered about her stirrup, caught at her foot, and thrust their babies into her arms. She took one little one to her breast, and hushed it tenderly; it was burnt and dry with fever.

'Be careful,' said Mrs. Estes; 'there is small-pox in the hills behind us, and these people have no notion of precautions.'

Kate, listening to the cry of the women, did not answer. A portly, white-bearded native, in a brown camel's hair dressing-gown and patent

leather boots, came out of the dispensary, thrusting the women right and left, and bowing profoundly.

'You are new lady doctor?' he said. 'Hospital is quite ready for inspection. Stand back from the miss sahib!' he shouted in the vernacular, as Kate slipped to the ground, and the crowd closed about her. Mrs. Estes remained in the saddle, watching the scene.

A woman of the desert, very tall, gold-coloured, and scarlet-lipped, threw back her face-cloth, caught Kate by the wrist, and made as if she would drag her away, crying aloud fiercely in the vernacular. The trouble in her eyes was not to be denied. Kate followed unresisting, and, as the crowd parted, saw a camel kneeling in the roadway. On its back a gaunt skeleton of a man was muttering, and picking aimlessly at the nail-studded saddle. The woman drew herself up to full height, and, without a word, flung herself down upon the ground, clasping Kate's feet. Kate stooped to raise her, her underlip quivering, and the doctor from the steps shouted cheerfully—

'Oh, that is all right. He is confirmed lunatic, her husband. She is always bringing him here.'

'Have you done nothing, then?' cried Kate, turning on him angrily.

'What *can* do? She will not leave him here for treatment so I may blister him.'

'Blister him!' murmured Kate to herself, appalled, as she caught the woman's hands and held them firmly. 'Tell her that I say he must be left here,' she said aloud. The doctor conveyed the command. The woman took a deep breath, and stared at Kate under level brows for a full half-minute. Then she carried Kate's hand to the man's forehead, and sat down in the dust, veiling her head.

Kate, dumb under these strange expressions of the workings of the Eastern mind, stared at her for a moment, with an impulse of the compassion which knows no race, before she bent and kissed her quietly on the forehead.

'Carry this man up,' she said, pointing; and he was carried up the steps and into the hospital, his wife following like a dog. Once she turned and spoke to her sisters below, and there went up a little chorus of weeping and laughter.

'She says,' said the doctor, beaming, 'that she will kill any one who is impolite to you. Also, she will be the nurse of your son.'

Kate paused to say a word to Mrs. Estes, who was bound on an errand further into the city; then she mounted the steps with the doctor.

'Now, will you see the hospital?' he asked. 'But first let me introduce. I am Lalla Dhunpat

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Rai, Licentiate Medicine, from the Duff College. I was first native my province that took that degree. That was twenty years ago.'

Kate looked at him wonderingly. 'Where have you been since?' she asked.

'Some time I stayed in my father's house. Then I was clerk in medical stores in British India. But his Highness have graciously given me this appointment, which I hold now.'

Kate lifted her eyebrows. This, then, was to be her colleague. They passed into the hospital together in silence, Kate holding the skirt of her riding-habit clear of the accumulated grime of the floor.

Six roughly made pallets, laced with hide and string, stood in the filthy central courtyard of the house, and on each cot a man, swathed in a white sheet, tossed and moaned and jabbered. A woman entered with a pot full of rancid native sweetmeats, and tried vainly to make one of the men eat of her delicacies. In the full glare of the sunlight stood a young man almost absolutely unclothed, his hands clasped behind his head, trying to outstare the sun. He began a chant, broke off, and hurried from bed to bed, shouting to each words that Kate could not understand. Then he returned to his place in the centre, and took up his interrupted song.

'He is confirmed lunatic, also,' said the doctor. 'I have blistered and cupped him very severely, but he will not go away. He is quite harmless, except when he does not get his opium.'

'Surely you don't allow the patients opium!' exclaimed Kate.

'*Of course* I allow opium. Otherwise they would die. All Rajputs eat opium.'

'And you?' asked Kate, with horror.

'Once I did not—when I first came. But now——' He drew a smooth-worn tin tobacco-box from his waist, and took from it what appeared to Kate a handful of opium pills.

Despair was going over her in successive waves. 'Show me the women's ward,' she said wearily.

'Oh, they are all upstairs and downstairs and roundabout,' returned the doctor casually.

'And the maternity cases?' she asked.

'They are in casual ward.'

'Who attends to them?'

'They do not like me; but there is very clever woman from the outside—she comes in.'

'Has she any training—any education?'

'She is much esteemed in her own village,' said the doctor. 'She is here now, if you wish to see.'

'Where?' demanded Kate.

Dhunpat Rai, somewhat uneasy in his mind, made haste to lead the way up a narrow staircase

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

to a closed door, from behind which came the wail of a new life.

Kate flung the door open wrathfully. In that particular ward of the State Hospital were the clay and cow-dung images of two gods, which the woman in charge was besprinkling with marigold buds. Every window, every orifice that might admit a breath of air, was closed, and the birth-fire blazed fiercely in one corner, its fumes nearly asphyxiating Kate as she entered.

What happened between Kate and the much-esteemed woman will never be known. The girl did not emerge for half an hour. But the woman came out much sooner, dishevelled, and cackling feebly.

After this Kate was prepared for anything, even for the neglected condition of the drugs in the dispensary — the mortar was never cleaned, and every prescription carried to the patient many more drugs than were written for him — and for the foul, undrained, uncleaned, unlighted, and unventilated rooms which she entered one after another hopelessly. The patients were allowed to receive their friends as they would, and to take from their hands whatever misguided kindness offered. When death came, the mourners howled in chorus about the cot, and bore the naked body through the courtyard, amid the jeers of the

lunatic, to carry to the city what infection Heaven willed.

There was no isolation of infectious cases during the progress of the disease, and children scourged with ophthalmia played light-heartedly with the children of the visitors or among diphtheria beds. At one point, and one point only, the doctor was strong; he was highly successful in dealing with the very common trouble entered on the day-book as 'loin bite.' The woodcutters and small traders who had occasion to travel through the lonely roads of the State were not infrequently struck down by tigers, and in these cases the doctor, discarding the entire English pharmacopœia, fell back on simples of proved repute in the neighbouring villages, and wrought wonders. None the less, it was necessary to convey to him that in future there would be only one head of the State Hospital, that her orders must be obeyed without question, and that her name was Miss Kate Sheriff.

The doctor, reflecting that she attended on the women of the court, offered no protest. He had been through many such periods of reform and reorganisation, and knew that his own inertia and a smooth tongue would carry him through many more. He bowed and assented, allowing Kate's reproaches to pass over his head, and parrying all questions with the statement—

'This hospital only allowed one hundred and fifty rupees per mensem from State revenues. How can get drugs all the way from Calcutta for that?'

'*I* am paying for this order,' said Kate, writing out a list of needed drugs and appliances on the desk in the bath-room, which was supposed to serve as an office; 'and I shall pay for whatever else I think necessary.'

'Order going through me offeecially?' suggested Dhunpat Rai, with his head on one side.

Unwilling to raise unnecessary obstacles, Kate assented. With those poor creatures lying in the rooms about her unwatched, untended, at the mercy of this creature, it was not a time to argue about commissions.

'Yes,' she said decidedly; 'of course.' And the doctor, when he saw the size and scope of the order, felt that he could endure much at her hands.

At the end of the three hours Kate came away, fainting with weariness, want of food, and bitter heartache.

XI

Who speaks to the King carries his life in his hand.
Native Proverb.

TARVIN found the Maharajah, who had not yet taken his morning allowance of opium, sunk in the deepest depression. The man from Topaz gazed at him shrewdly, filled with his purpose.

The Maharajah's first words helped him to declare it. 'What have you come here for?' he asked.

'To Rhatore?' inquired Tarvin, with a smile that embraced the whole horizon.

'Yes; to Rhatore,' grunted the Maharajah. 'The agent sahib says you do not belong to any government, and that you have come here only to see things and write lies about them. Why have you come?'

'I have come to turn your river. There is gold in it,' he said steadily.

The Rajah answered him with brevity. 'Go and speak to the Government,' he said sulkily.

'It's your river, I guess,' returned Tarvin cheerfully.

'Mine! Nothing in the State is mine. The shopkeeper people are at my gates day and night. The agent sahib won't let me collect taxes as my fathers used to do. I have no army.'

'That's perfectly true,' assented Tarvin, under his breath. 'I'll run off with it some morning.'

'And if I had,' continued the Maharajah, 'I have no one to fight against. I am only an old wolf, with all my teeth drawn. Go away!'

They were talking in the flagged courtyard immediately outside that wing of the palace occupied by Sitabhai. The Maharajah was sitting in a broken Windsor chair, while his grooms brought up successive files of horses, saddled and bridled, in the hope that one of the animals might be chosen for his Majesty's ride. The stale, sick air of the palace drifted across the marble flags before the morning wind, and it was not a wholesome smell.

Tarvin, who had drawn rein in the courtyard without dismounting, flung his right leg over the pony's withers, and held his peace. He had seen something of the effect of opium upon the Maharajah. A servant was approaching with a small

brass bowl full of opium and water. The Maharajah swallowed the draught with many wry faces, dashed the last brown drops from his moustache and beard, and dropped back into the chair, staring with vacant eyes. In a few minutes he sprang to his feet, erect and smiling.

'Are you here, Sahib?' said he. 'You are here, or I should not feel ready to laugh. Do you go riding this morning?'

'I'm your man.'

'Then we will bring out the Foxhall colt. He will throw you.'

'Very good,' said Tarvin leisurely.

'And I will ride my own Cutch mare. Let us get away before the agent sahib comes,' said the Maharajah.

The blast of a bugle was heard without the courtyard, and a clatter of wheels, as the grooms departed to saddle the horses.

The Maharaj Kunwar ran up the steps and pattered toward the Maharajah, his father, who picked him up in his lap, and fondled him.

'What brings thee here, Lalji?' asked the Maharajah. Lalji, the Beloved, was the familiar name by which the Prince was known within the palace.

'I came to exercise my guard. Father, they are giving me bad saddlery for my troopers from

the State arsenal. Jeysingh's saddle-peak is mended with string, and Jeysingh is the best of my soldiers. Moreover, he tells me nice tales,' said the Maharaj Kunwar, speaking in the vernacular, with a friendly little nod toward Tarvin.

'Hai! Hai! Thou art like all the rest,' said the King. 'Always some fresh demand upon the State. And what is it now?'

The child joined his little hands together, and caught his father fearlessly by his monstrous beard, which, in the manner of a Rajput, was brushed up over his ears. 'Only ten little new saddles,' said the child. 'They are in the big saddle-rooms. I have seen them. But the keeper of the horses said that I was first to ask the King.'

The Maharajah's face darkened, and he swore a great oath by his gods.

'The King is a slave and a servant,' he growled —'the servant of the agent sahib and this woman-talking English Raj; but, by Indur! the King's son is at least a King's son. What right had Saroop Singh to stay thee from anything that thou desiredst, Prince?'

'I told him,' said the Maharaj Kunwar, 'that my father would not be pleased. But I said no more, because I was not very well, and thou knowest' —the boy's head drooped under the turban—'I am only a little child. I may have the saddles?'

Tarvin, to whom no word of this conversation was intelligible, sat at ease on his pony, smiling at his friend the Maharaj. The interview had begun in the dead dawn-silence of the courtyard—a silence so intense that he could hear the doves cooing on a tower a hundred and fifty feet above his head. But now all four sides of the green-shuttered courtyard were alive, awake, and intent about him. He could hear muffled breathings, the rustle of draperies, and the faintest possible jarring of shutters, cautiously opened from within. A heavy smell of musk and jasmine came to his nostrils and filled him with uneasiness, for he knew, without turning his head or his eyes, that Sitabhai and her women were watching all that went on. But neither the King nor the Prince heeded. The Maharaj Kunwar was very full of his English lessons, learned at Mrs. Estes' knee, and the King was as interested as he. Lest Tarvin should fail to understand, the Prince began to speak in English again, but very slowly and distinctly, that his father also might comprehend.

'And this is a new verse,' he said, 'which I learned only yesterday.'

'Is there any talk of their gods in it?' asked the Maharajah suspiciously. 'Remember thou art a Rajput.'

'No; oh no!' said the Prince. 'It is only English, and I learned it very quickly.'

'Let me hear, little Pundit. Some day thou wilt become a scribe, and go to the English colleges, and wear a long black gown.'

The child slipped quickly back into the vernacular. 'The flag of our State has five colours,' he said. 'When I have fought for that, perhaps I will become an Englishman.'

'There is no leading of armies afield any more, little one; but say thy verses.'

The subdued rustle of unseen hundreds grew more intense. Tarvin leaned forward with his chin in his hand, as the Prince slid down from his father's lap, put his hands behind him, and began, without pauses or expression—

> 'Tiger, tiger, burning bright
> In the forests of the night,
> What immortal hand or eye
> Framed thy fearful symmetry?
> When thy heart began to beat
> What dread hand made thy dread feet?

'There is more that I have forgotten,' he went on, 'but the last line is—

> 'Did he who made the lamb make thee?

I learned it all very quickly.' And he began to applaud himself with both hands, while Tarvin followed suit.

'I do not understand; but it is good to know English. Thy friend here speaks such English as I never knew,' said the Maharajah in the vernacular.

'Ay,' rejoined the Prince. 'But he speaks with his face and his hands alive—so; and I laugh before I know why. Now Colonel Nolan Sahib speaks like a buffalo, with his mouth shut. I cannot tell whether he is angry or pleased. But, father, what does Tarvin Sahib do here?'

'We go for a ride together,' returned the King. 'When we return, perhaps I will tell thee. What do the men about thee say of him?'

'They say he is a man of clean heart; and he is always kind to me.'

'Has he said aught to thee of me?'

'Never in language that I could understand. But I do not doubt that he is a good man. See, he is laughing now.'

Tarvin, who had pricked up his ears at hearing his own name, now resettled himself in the saddle, and gathered up his reins, as a hint to the King that it was time to be moving.

The grooms brought up a long, switch-tailed English thoroughbred and a lean, mouse-coloured mare. The Maharajah rose to his feet.

'Go back to Saroop Singh and get the saddles, Prince,' said he.

'What are you going to do to-day, little man?' asked Tarvin.

'I shall go and get new equipment,' answered the child, 'and then I shall come to play with the prime minister's son here.'

Again, like the hiss of a hidden snake, the rustle behind the shutters increased. Evidently some one there understood the child's words.

'Shall you see Miss Kate to-day?'

'Not to-day. 'Tis holiday for me. I do not go to Miss Estes to-day.'

The King turned on Tarvin swiftly, and spoke under his breath.

'Must he see that doctor lady every day? All my people lie to me, in the hope of winning my favour; even Colonel Nolan says that the child is very strong. Speak the truth. He is my first son.'

'He is not strong,' answered Tarvin calmly. 'Perhaps it would be better to let him see Miss Sheriff this morning. You don't lose anything by keeping your weather eye open, you know.'

'I do not understand,' said the King; 'but go to the missionary's house to-day, my son.'

'I am to come here and play,' answered the Prince petulantly.

'You don't know what Miss Sheriff's got for you to play with,' said Tarvin.

'What is it?' asked the Maharaj sharply.

'You've got a carriage and ten troopers,' replied Tarvin. 'You've only got to go there and find out.'

He drew a letter from his breast-pocket, glancing with liking at the two-cent American stamp, and scribbled a note to Kate on the envelope, which ran thus:—

'Keep the little fellow with you to-day. There's a wicked look about things this morning. Find something for him to do; get up games for him; do anything, but keep him away from the palace. I got your note. All right. I understand.'

He called the Maharaj to him, and handed him the note. 'Take this to Miss Kate, like a little man, and say I sent you,' he said.

'My son is not an orderly,' said the King surlily.

'Your son is not very well, and I'm the first to speak the truth to you about him, it seems to me,' said Tarvin. 'Gently on that colt's mouth—you.' The Foxhall colt was dancing between his grooms.

'You'll be thrown,' said the Maharaj Kunwar, in an ecstasy of delight. 'He throws all his grooms.'

At that moment a shutter in the courtyard clicked distinctly three times in the silence.

One of the grooms passed to the off-side of the plunging colt deftly. Tarvin put his foot into the stirrup to spring up, when the saddle turned completely round. Some one let go of the horse's head, and Tarvin had just time to kick his foot free as the animal sprang forward.

'I've seen slicker ways of killing a man than that,' he said quietly. 'Bring my friend back,' he added to one of the grooms; and when the Foxhall colt was under his hands again he cinched him up as the beast had not been girt since he had first felt the bit. 'Now,' he said, and leaped into the saddle, as the King clattered out of the courtyard.

The colt reared on end, landed stiffly on his forefeet, and lashed out. Tarvin, sitting him with the cow-boy seat, said quietly to the child, who was still watching his movements, 'Run along, Maharaj. Don't hang around here. Let me see you started for Miss Kate.'

The boy obeyed, with a regretful glance at the prancing horse. Then the Foxhall colt devoted himself to unseating his rider. He refused to quit the courtyard, though Tarvin argued with him, first behind the saddle, and then between the indignant ears. Accustomed to grooms who slipped off at the first sign of rebellion, the Foxhall colt was wrathful. Without warning, he dashed through the archway, wheeled on his haunches,

and bolted in pursuit of the Maharajah's mare. Once in the open, sandy country, he felt that he had a field worthy of his powers. Tarvin also saw his opportunity. The Maharajah, known in his youth as a hard rider among a nation of perhaps the hardest riders on earth, turned in his saddle and watched the battle with interest.

'You ride like a Rajput,' he shouted, as Tarvin flew past him. 'Breathe him on a straight course in the open.'

'Not till he's learned who's boss,' replied Tarvin, and he wrenched the colt around.

'*Shabash! Shabash!* Oh, well done! Well done!' cried the Maharajah, as the colt answered the bit. 'Tarvin Sahib, I'll make you colonel of my regular cavalry.'

'Ten million irregular devils!' said Tarvin impolitely. 'Come back, you brute! Back!'

The horse's head was bowed on his lathering chest under the pressure of the curb; but before obeying he planted his forefeet, and bucked as viciously as one of Tarvin's own broncos. 'Both feet down and chest extended,' he murmured gaily to himself, as the creature see-sawed up and down. He was in his element, and dreamed himself back in Topaz.

'*Maro! Maro!*' exclaimed the King. 'Hit him hard! Hit him well!'

'Oh, let him have his little picnic,' said Tarvin easily. 'I like it.'

When the colt was tired he was forced to back for ten yards. 'Now we'll go on,' said Tarvin, and fell into a trot by the side of the Maharajah. 'That river of yours is full of gold,' he said, after a moment's silence, as if continuing an uninterrupted conversation.

'When I was a young man,' said the King, 'I rode pig here. We chased them with the sword in the springtime. That was before the English came. Over there, by that pile of rock, I broke my collar-bone.'

'Full of gold, Maharajah Sahib. How do you propose to get it out?'

Tarvin knew something already of the King's discursiveness; he did not mean to give way to it.

'What do I know?' answered the King solemnly. 'Ask the agent sahib.'

'But, look here, who *does* run this State, you or Colonel Nolan?'

'You know,' returned the Maharajah. 'You have seen.' He pointed north and south. 'There,' he said, 'is one railway line; yonder is another. I am a goat between two wolves.'

'Well, anyway, the country between is your own. Surely you can do what you like with that.'

They had ridden some two or three miles beyond the city, parallel with the course of the Amet River, their horses sinking fetlock-deep in the soft sand. The King looked along the chain of shining pools, the white, rush-tipped hillocks of the desert, and the far distant line of low granite-topped hills, whence the Amet sprang. It was not a prospect to delight the heart of a King.

'Yes; I am lord of all this country,' he said. 'But look you, one-fourth of my revenue is swallowed up by those who collect it; one-fourth those black-faced camel-breeders in the sand there will not pay, and I must not march troops against them; one-fourth I myself, perhaps, receive; but the people who should pay the other fourth do not know to whom it should be sent. Yes; I am a very rich king.'

'Well, any way you look at it, the river ought to treble your income.'

The Maharajah looked at Tarvin intently.

'What would the Government say?' he asked.

'I don't quite see where the Government comes in. You can lay out orange-gardens and take canals around them.' (There was a deep-set twinkle of comprehension in his Majesty's eye.) 'Working the river would be much easier. You've tried placer-mining here, haven't you?'

'There was some washing in the bed of the

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

river one summer. My jails were too full of convicts, and I feared rebellion. But there was nothing to see, except those black dogs digging in the sand. That year I won the Poonah cup with a bay pony.'

Tarvin brought his hand down on his thigh with an unguarded smack. What was the use of talking business to this wearied man, who would pawn what the opium had left to him of soul for something to see? He shifted his ground instantly.

'Yes; that sort of mining is nothing to look at. What you want is a little dam up Gungra way.'

'Near the hills?'

'Yes.'

'No man has ever dammed the Amet,' said the King. 'It comes out of the ground, and sinks back into the ground, and when the rain falls it is as big as the Indus.'

'We'll have the whole bed of it laid bare before the rains begin—bare for twelve miles,' said Tarvin, watching the effect on his companion.

'No man has dammed the Amet,' was the stony reply.

'No *man* has ever tried. Give me all the labour I want, and *I* will dam the Amet.'

'Where will the water go?' inquired the King.

'I'll take it around another way, as you took the canal around the orange-garden, of course.'

'Ah! *Then* Colonel Nolan talked to me as if I were a child.'

'You know why, Maharajah Sahib,' said Tarvin placidly.

The King was frozen for a moment by this audacity. He knew that all the secrets of his domestic life were common talk in the mouths of the city, for no man can bridle three hundred women; but he was not prepared to find them so frankly hinted at by this irreverent stranger, who was and was not an Englishman.

'Colonel Nolan will say nothing this time,' continued Tarvin. 'Besides, it will help your people.'

'Who are also his,' said the King.

The opium was dying out of his brain, and his head fell forward upon his chest.

'Then I shall begin to-morrow,' said Tarvin. 'It will be something to see. I must find the best place to dam the river, and I daresay you can lend me a few hundred convicts.'

'But why have you come here at all,' asked the King, 'to dam my rivers, and turn my State upside down?'

'Because it's good for you to laugh, Maharajah Sahib. You know that as well as I do. I will play pachisi with you every night until you are

tired, and I can speak the truth—a rare commodity in these parts.'

'Did you speak truth about the Maharaj Kunwar? Is he indeed not well?'

'I have told you he isn't quite strong. But there's nothing the matter with him that Miss Sheriff can't put right.'

'Is that the truth?' demanded the King. 'Remember, he has my throne after me.'

'If I know Miss Sheriff, he'll have that throne. Don't you fret, Maharajah Sahib.'

'You are great friend of hers?' pursued his companion. 'You both come from one country?'

'Yes,' assented Tarvin; 'and one town.'

'Tell me about that town,' said the King curiously.

Tarvin, nothing loth, told him—told him at length, in detail, and with his own touches of verisimilitude, forgetting in the heat of admiration and affection that the King could understand, at best, not more than one word in ten of his vigorous Western colloquialisms. Half way through his rhapsody the King interrupted.

'If it was so good, why did you not stay there?'

'I came to see you,' said Tarvin quickly. 'I heard about you there.'

'Then it is true, what my poets sing to me,

that my fame is known in the four corners of the earth? I will fill Bussant Rao's mouth with gold if it is so.'

'You can bet your life. Would you like me to go away, though? Say the word!' Tarvin made as if to check his horse.

The Maharajah remained sunk in deep thought, and when he spoke it was slowly and distinctly, that Tarvin might catch every word. 'I hate all the English,' he said. 'Their ways are not my ways, and they make such trouble over the killing of a man here and there. *Your* ways are not my ways; but you do not give so much trouble, and you are a friend of the doctor lady.'

'Well, I hope I'm a friend of the Maharaj Kunwar's too,' said Tarvin.

'Are you a true friend to him?' asked the King, eyeing him closely.

'That's all right. I'd like to see the man who tried to lay a hand on the little one. He'd vanish, King; he'd disappear; he wouldn't be. I'd mop up Gokral Seetarun with him.'

'I have seen you hit that rupee. Do it again.'

Without thinking for a moment of the Foxhall colt, Tarvin drew his revolver, tossed a coin into the air, and fired. The coin fell beside them—a fresh one this time—marked squarely in the centre. The colt plunged furiously, and the Cutch mare

curveted. There was a thunder of hoofs behind him. The escort, which, till now, had waited respectfully a quarter of a mile behind, were racing up at full speed, with levelled lances. The King laughed a little contemptuously.

'They are thinking you have shot me,' he said. 'So they will kill you, unless I stop them. Shall I stop them?'

Tarvin thrust out his under jaw with a motion peculiar to himself, wheeled the colt, and waited without answering, his empty hands folded on the pommel of his saddle. The troop swept down in an irregular mob, each man crouching, lance in rest, over his saddle-bow, and the captain of the troop flourishing a long, straight Rajput sword. Tarvin felt rather than saw the lean, venomous lance-heads converging on the breast of the colt. The King drew off a few yards, and watched him where he stood alone in the centre of the plain, waiting. For that single moment, in which he faced death, Tarvin thought to himself that he preferred any customer to a Maharajah.

Suddenly his Highness shouted once, the lance-butts fell as though they had been smitten down, and the troop, opening out, whirled by on each side of Tarvin, each man striving as nearly as might be to brush the white man's boot.

The white man stared in front of him without

turning his head, and the King gave a little grunt of approval.

'Would you have done that for the Maharaj Kunwar?' he asked, wheeling his mare in again beside him, after a pause.

'No,' said Tarvin placidly. 'I should have begun shooting long before.'

'What! Fifty men?'

'No; the captain.'

The King shook in his saddle with laughter, and held up his hand. The commandant of the troop trotted up.

'*Ohe*, Pertab Singh-Ji, he says he would have shot thee.' Then, turning to Tarvin, smiling, 'That is my cousin.'

The burly Rajput captain grinned from ear to ear, and, to Tarvin's surprise, answered in perfect English—'That would do for irregular cavalry—to kill the subalterns, you understand—but we are drilled exclusively on English model, and I have my commission from the Queen. Now, in the German army——'

Tarvin looked at him in blank amazement.

'But you are not connected with the military,' said Pertab Singh-Ji politely. 'I have heard how you shot, and I saw what you were doing. But you must please excuse. When a shot is fired near his Highness it is our order always to come up.'

He saluted, and withdrew to his troop.

The sun was growing unpleasantly hot, and the King and Tarvin trotted back toward the city.

'How many convicts can you lend me?' asked Tarvin, as they went.

'All my jails full, if you want them,' was the enthusiastic answer. 'By God, sahib, I never saw anything like that. I would give you anything.'

Tarvin took off his hat, and mopped his forehead, laughing.

'Very good, then. I'll ask for something that will cost you nothing.'

The Maharajah grunted doubtfully. People generally demanded of him things he was not willing to part with.

'That talk is new to me, Tarvin Sahib,' said he.

'You'll see I'm in earnest when I say I only want to look at the Naulahka. I've seen all your State diamonds and gold carriages, but I haven't seen that.'

The Maharajah trotted fifty yards without replying. Then—

'Do they speak of it where you come from?'

'Of course. All Americans know that it's the biggest thing in India. It's in all the guide-books,' said Tarvin brazenly.

'Do the books say where it is? The English

people are so wise.' The Maharajah stared straight in front of him, and almost smiled.

'No; but they say you know, and I'd like to see it.'

'You must understand, Tarvin Sahib'—the Maharajah spoke meditatively—'that this is not *a* State jewel, but *the* State jewel—the jewel of the State. It is a holy thing. Even I do not keep it, and I cannot give you any order to see it.'

Tarvin's heart sank.

'But,' the Maharajah continued, 'if I say where it is, you can go at your own risk, without Government interfering. I have seen you are not afraid of risk, and I am a very grateful man. Perhaps the priests will show you; perhaps they will not. Or perhaps you will not find the priests at all. Oh, I forgot; it is not in *that* temple that I was thinking of. No; it must be in the Gye-Mukh —the Cow's Mouth. But there are no priests there, and nobody goes. Of course it is in the Cow's Mouth. I thought it was in this city,' resumed the Maharajah. He spoke as if he were talking of a dropped horse-shoe or a mislaid turban.

'Oh, of course. The Cow's Mouth,' repeated Tarvin, as if this also were in the guide-books.

Chuckling with renewed animation, the King went on—'By God, only a very brave man would

go to the Gye-Mukh; such a brave man as yourself, Tarvin Sahib,' he added, giving his companion a shrewd look. 'Ho, ho! Pertab Singh-Ji would not go. No; not with all his troops that you conquered to-day.'

'Keep your praise until I've earned it, Maharajah Sahib,' said Tarvin. 'Wait until I've dammed that river.' He was silent for a while, as if digesting this newest piece of information.

'Now, you have a city like this city, I suppose?' said the Maharajah interrogatively, pointing to Rhatore.

Tarvin had overcome, in a measure, his first feeling of contempt for the State of Gokral Seetarun and the city of Rhatore. He had begun to look upon them both, as was his nature in the case of people and things with which he dwelt, with a certain kindness.

'Topaz is going to be bigger,' he explained.

'And when you are there what is your offeecial position?' asked the Maharajah.

Tarvin, without answering, drew from his breast-pocket the cable from Mrs. Mutrie, and handed it in silence to the King. Where an election was concerned even the sympathy of an opium-soaked Rajput was not indifferent to him.

'What does it mean?' asked the King, and Tarvin threw up his hands in despair.

He explained his connection with the government of his State, making the Colorado legislature appear as one of the parliaments of America. He owned up to being the Hon. Nicholas Tarvin, if the Maharajah really wanted to give him his full title.

'Such as the members of provincial councils that come here?' suggested the Maharajah, remembering the grey-headed men who visited him from time to time, charged with authority only little less than that of a viceroy. 'But still you will not write letters to that legislature about my government,' queried he suspiciously, recalling again over-curious emissaries from the British Parliament over seas, who sat their horses like sacks, and talked interminably of good government when he wished to go to bed. 'And above all,' he added slowly, as they drew near to the palace, 'you are most true friend of the Maharaj Kunwar? And your friend, the lady doctor, will make him well?'

'That,' said Tarvin, with a sudden inspiration, 'is what we are both here for!'

XII

This I saw when the rites were done,
And the lamps were dead and the Gods alone,
And the grey snake coiled on the altar stone—
Ere I fled from a Fear that I could not see,
And the Gods of the East made mouths at me.
In Seonee.

WHEN he left the King's side, Tarvin's first impulse was to set the Foxhall colt into a gallop, and forthwith depart in search of the Naulahka. He mechanically drove his heels home, and shortened his rein under the impulse of the thought; but the colt's leap beneath him recalled him to his senses, and he restrained himself and his mount with the same motion.

His familiarity with the people's grotesque nomenclature left him unimpressed by the Cow's Mouth as a name for a spot, but he gave some wonder to the question why the thing should be *in* the Cow's Mouth. This was a matter to be laid before Estes.

'These heathen,' he said to himself, 'are just the sort to hide it away in a salt-lick, or bury it in a hole in the ground. Yes; a hole is about their size. They put the State diamonds in cracker-boxes tied up with boot-laces. The Naulahka is probably hanging on a tree.'

As he trotted toward the missionary's house, he looked at the hopeless landscape with new interest, for any spur of the low hills, or any roof in the jumbled city, might contain his treasure.

Estes, who had outlived many curiosities, and knew Rajputana as a prisoner knows the bricks of his cell, turned on Tarvin, in reply to the latter's direct question, a flood of information. There were mouths of all kinds in India, from the Burning Mouth in the north, where a jet of natural gas was worshipped by millions as the incarnation of a divinity, to the Devil's Mouth among some forgotten Buddhist ruins in the furthest southern corner of Madras.

There was also a Cow's Mouth some hundreds of miles away, in the courtyard of a temple at Benares, much frequented by devotees; but as far as Rajputana was concerned, there was only one Cow's Mouth, and that was to be found in a dead city.

The missionary launched into a history of wars and rapine, extending over hundreds of years, all

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

centring round one rock-walled city in the wilderness, which had been the pride and the glory of the kings of Mewar. Tarvin listened with patience as infinite as his weariness—ancient history had no charm for the man who was making his own town—while Estes enlarged upon the past, and told stories of voluntary immolation on the pyre in subterranean palaces by thousands of Rajput women who, when the city fell before a Mohammedan, and their kin had died in the last charge of defence, cheated the conquerors of all but the empty glory of conquest. Estes had a taste for archæology, and it was a pleasure to him to speak of it to a fellow-countryman.

By retracing the ninety-six miles to Rawut Junction, Tarvin might make connection with a train that would carry him sixty-seven miles westward to yet another junction, where he would change and go south by rail for a hundred and seven miles; and this would bring him within four miles of this city, its marvellous nine-storeyed tower of glory, which he was to note carefully, its stupendous walls and desolate palaces. The journey would occupy at least two days. At this point Tarvin suggested a map, and a glance at it showed him that Estes proposed an elaborate circus round three sides of a square, whereas a spider-like line ran more or less directly from Rhatore to Gunnaur.

'This seems shorter,' he said.

'It's only a country road, and you have had some experience of roads in this State. Fifty-seven miles on a *kutcha* road in this sun would be fatal.'

Tarvin smiled to himself. He had no particular dread of the sun, which, year by year, had stolen from his companion something of his vitality.

'I think I'll ride, anyhow. It seems a waste to travel half round India to get at a thing across the road, though it *is* the custom of the country.'

He asked the missionary what the Cow's Mouth was like, and Estes explained archæologically, architecturally, and philologically to such good purpose that Tarvin understood that it was some sort of a hole in the ground—an ancient, a remarkably ancient, hole of peculiar sanctity, but nothing more than a hole.

Tarvin decided to start without an hour's delay. The dam might wait until he returned. It was hardly likely that the King's outburst of generosity would lead him to throw open his jails on the morrow. Tarvin debated for a while whether he should tell him of the excursion he was proposing to himself, and then decided that he would look at the necklace first, and open negotiations later. This seemed to suit the customs of the country. He returned to the rest-house with Estes' map in his pocket to take stock of his stable. Like other

men of the West, he reckoned a horse a necessity before all necessities, and had purchased one mechanically immediately after his arrival. It had been a comfort to him to note all the tricks of all the men he had ever traded horses with faithfully reproduced in the lean, swarthy Cabuli trader, who had led his kicking, plunging horse up to the veranda one idle evening; and it had been a greater comfort to battle with them as he had battled in the old days. The result of the skirmish, fought out in broken English and expressive American, was an unhandsome, doubtful-tempered, mouse-coloured Kathiawar stallion, who had been dismissed for vice from the service of his Majesty, and who weakly believed that, having eaten pieces of the troopers of the Deolee Irregular Horse, ease and idleness awaited him. Tarvin had undeceived him leisurely, in such moments as he most felt the need of doing something, and the Kathiawar, though never grateful, was at least civil. He had been christened Fibby Winks in recognition of ungentlemanly conduct and a resemblance which Tarvin fancied he detected between the beast's lean face and that of the man who had jumped his claim.

Tarvin threw back the loin cloth as he came upon Fibby drowsing in the afternoon sun behind the rest-house.

'We're going for a little walk down town, Fibby,' he said.

The Kathiawar squealed and snapped.

'Yes; you always were a loafer, Fibby.'

Fibby was saddled by his nervous native attendant, while Tarvin took a blanket from his room and rolled up into it an imaginative assortment of provisions. Fibby was to find his rations where Heaven pleased. Then he set out as lightheartedly as though he were going for a canter round the city. It was now about three in the afternoon. All Fibby's boundless reserves of illtemper and stubborn obstinacy Tarvin resolved should be devoted, by the aid of his spurs, to covering the fifty-seven miles to Gunnaur in the next ten hours, if the road were fair. If not, he should be allowed another two hours. The return journey would not require spurs. There was a moon that night, and Tarvin knew enough of native roads in Gokral Seetarun, and rough trails elsewhere, to be certain that he would not be confused by cross-tracks.

It being borne into Fibby's mind that he was required to advance, not in three directions at once, but in one, he clicked his bit comfortably in his mouth, dropped his head, and began to trot steadily. Then Tarvin pulled him up, and addressed him tenderly.

'Fib, my boy, we're not out for exercise—you'll learn that before sundown. Some galoot has been training you to waste your time over the English trot. I'll be discussing other points with you in the course of the campaign; but we'll settle this now. We don't begin with crime. Drop it, Fibby, and behave like a man-horse.'

Tarvin was obliged to make further remarks on the same subject before Fibby returned to the easy native lope, which is also a common Western pace, tiring neither man nor beast. By this he began to understand that a long journey was demanded of him, and, lowering his tail, buckled down to it.

At first he moved in a cloud of sandy dust with the cotton wains and the country carts that were creaking out to the far distant railway at Gunnaur. As the sun began to sink, his gaunt shadow danced like a goblin across low-lying volcanic rock tufted with shrubs, and here and there an aloe.

The carters unyoked their cattle on the roadside, and prepared to eat their evening meal by the light of dull red fires. Fibby cocked one ear wistfully toward the flames, but held on through the gathering shadows, and Tarvin smelt the acrid juice of bruised camel-thorn beneath his horse's hoofs. The moon rose in splendour behind him,

and, following his lurching shadow, he overtook a naked man who bore over his shoulder a stick loaded with jingling bells, and fled panting and perspiring from one who followed him armed with a naked sword. This was the mail-carrier and his escort running to Gunnaur. The jingling died away on the dead air, and Fibby was ambling between interminable lines of thorn bushes that threw mad arms to the stars, and cast shadows as solid as themselves across the road. Some beast of the night plunged through the thicket alongside, and Fibby snorted in panic. Then a porcupine crossed under his nose with a rustle of quills, and left an evil stench to poison the stillness for a moment. A point of light gleamed ahead, where a bullock-cart had broken down, and the drivers were sleeping peacefully till daylight should show the injury. Here Fibby stopped, and Tarvin, through the magic of a rupee, representing fortune to the rudely awakened sleepers, procured food and a little water for him, eased the girths, and made as much of him as he was disposed to permit. On starting again, Fibby found his second wind, and with it there woke the spirit of daring and adventure inherited from his ancestors, who were accustomed to take their masters thirty leagues in a day for the sacking of a town, to sleep by a lance driven into the earth as a picket, and to return

whence they had come before the ashes of the houses had lost heat. So Fibby lifted his tail valiantly, neighed, and began to move.

The road descended for miles, crossing the dry beds of many water-courses and once a broad river, where Fibby stopped for another drink, and would have lain down to roll in a melon-bed but that his rider spurred him on up the slope. The country grew more fertile at every mile, and rolled in broader waves. Under the light of the setting moon, the fields showed silver-white with the opium-poppy, or dark with sugar-cane.

Poppy and sugar ceased together, as Fibby topped a long, slow ascent, and with distended nostrils, snuffed for the wind of the morning. He knew that the day would bring him rest. Tarvin peered forward where the white line of the road disappeared in the gloom of velvety scrub. He commanded a vast level plain flanked by hills of soft outline—a plain that in the dim light seemed as level as the sea. Like the sea, too, it bore on its breast a ship, like a gigantic monitor with a sharp bow, cutting her way from north to south; such a ship as man never yet has seen—two miles long, with three or four hundred feet freeboard, lonely, silent, mastless, without lights, a derelict of the earth.

'We are nearly there, Fib, my boy,' said Tarvin,

drawing rein, and scanning the monstrous thing by the starlight. 'We'll get as close as we can, and then wait for the daylight before going aboard.'

They descended the slope, which was covered with sharp stones and sleeping goats. Then the road turned sharply to the left, and began to run parallel to the ship. Tarvin urged Fibby into a more direct path, and the good horse blundered piteously across the scrub-covered ground, cut up and channelled by the rains into a network of six-foot ravines and gulches.

Here he gave out with a despairing grunt. Tarvin took pity on him, and, fastening him to a tree, bade him think of his sins till breakfast-time, and dropped from his back into a dry and dusty water-hole. Ten steps further, and the scrub was all about him, whipping him across the brows, hooking thorns into his jacket, and looping roots in front of his knees as he pushed on up an ever-steepening incline.

At last Tarvin was crawling on his hands and knees, grimed from head to foot, and hardly to be distinguished from the wild pigs that passed like slate-coloured shadows through the tangle of the thickets on their way to their rest. Too absorbed to hear them grunt, he pulled and screwed himself up the slope, tugging at the roots as though he would rend the Naulahka from the bowels of the

earth, and swearing piously at every step. When he stopped to wipe the sweat from his face, he found, more by touch than by eye, that he knelt at the foot of a wall that ran up into the stars. Fibby, from the tangle below, was neighing dolefully.

'You're not hurt, Fibby,' he gasped, spitting out some fragments of dry grass; 'you aren't on in this scene. Nobody's asking *you* to fly to-night,' he said, looking hopelessly up at the wall again, and whistling softly in response to an owl's hooting overhead.

He began to pick his way between the foot of the wall and the scrub that grew up to it, pressing one hand against the huge cut stones, and holding the other before his face. A fig-seed had found foothold between two of the gigantic slabs, and, undisturbed through the centuries, had grown into an arrogant, gnarled tree, that writhed between the fissures and heaved the stonework apart. Tarvin considered for a while whether he could climb into the crook of the lowest branch, then moved on a few steps, and found the wall rent from top to bottom through the twenty feet of its thickness, allowing passage for the head of an army.

'Like them, exactly like them!' he mused. 'I might have expected it. To build a wall sixty

feet high, and put an eighty-foot hole in it! The Naulahka must be lying out on a bush, or a child's playing with it, and—I can't get it!'

He plunged through the gap, and found himself amid scattered pillars, slabs of stone, broken lintels, and tumbled tombs, and heard a low, thick hiss almost under his riding-boots. No man born of woman needs to be instructed in the voice of the serpent.

Tarvin jumped, and stayed still. Fibby's neigh came faintly now. The dawn-wind blew through the gap in the wall, and Tarvin wiped his forehead with a deep sigh of relief. He would do no more till the light came. This was the hour to eat and drink; also to stand very still, because of that voice from the ground.

He pulled food and a flask from his pocket, and, staring before him in every direction, ate hungrily. The loom of the night lifted a little, and he could see the outline of some great building a few yards away. Beyond this were other shadows, faint as the visions in a dream—the shadows of yet more temples and lines of houses; the wind, blowing among them, brought back a rustle of tossing hedges.

The shadows grew more distinct: he could see that he was standing with his face to some decayed tomb. Then his jaw fell, for, without warning or

presage, the red dawn shot up behind him, and there leaped out of the night the city of the dead. Tall-built, sharp-domed palaces, flushing to the colour of blood, revealed the horror of their emptiness, and glared at the day that pierced them through and through.

The wind passed singing down the empty streets, and, finding none to answer, returned, chasing before it a muttering cloud of dust, which presently whirled itself into a little cyclone-funnel, and lay down with a sigh.

A screen of fretted marble lay on the dry grass, where it had fallen from some window above, and a gecko crawled over it to sun himself. Already the dawn flush had passed. The hot light was everywhere, and a kite had poised himself in the parched blue sky. The day, new-born, might have been as old as the city. It seemed to Tarvin that he and it were standing still to hear the centuries race by on the wings of the purposeless dust.

As he took his first step into the streets, a peacock stepped from the threshold of a lofty red house, and spread his tail in the splendour of the sun. Tarvin halted, and with perfect gravity took off his hat to the royal bird, where it blazed against the sculptures on the wall, the sole living thing in sight.

The silence of the place and the insolent nakedness of the empty ways lay on him like a dead weight. For a long time he did not care to whistle, but rambled aimlessly from one wall to another, looking at the gigantic reservoirs, dry and neglected, the hollow guard-houses that studded the battlements, the time-riven arches that spanned the streets, and, above all, the carven tower with a shattered roof that sprang a hundred and fifty feet into the air, for a sign to the country-side that the royal city of Gunnaur was not dead, but would one day hum with men.

It was from this tower, encrusted with figures in high relief of beast and man, that Tarvin, after a heavy climb, looked out on the vast sleeping land in the midst of which the dead city lay. He saw the road by which he had come in the night, dipping and reappearing again over thirty miles of country, saw the white poppy-fields, the dull-brown scrub, and the unending plain to the northward, cut by the shining line of the rail. From his eyrie he peered forth as a man peers from a crow's-nest at sea; for, once down there below in the city, all view was cut off by the battlements that rose like bulwarks. On the side nearest to the railroad, sloping causeways, paved with stone, ran down to the plain under many gates, as the gangway of a ship when it is let down, and through the gaps in

the walls—time and the trees had torn their way to and fro—there was nothing to be seen except the horizon, which might have been the deep sea.

He thought of Fibby waiting in the scrub for his breakfast, and made haste to descend to the streets again. Remembering the essentials of his talk with Estes as to the position of the Cow's Mouth, he passed up a side lane, disturbing the squirrels and monkeys that had taken up their quarters in the cool dark of the rows of empty houses. The last house ended in a heap of ruins among a tangle of mimosa and tall grass, through which ran a narrow foot-track.

Tarvin marked the house as the first actual ruin he had seen. His complaint against all the others, the temples and the palaces, was that they were not ruined, but dead—empty, swept, and garnished, with the seven devils of loneliness in riotous possession. In time—in a few thousand years perhaps—the city would crumble away. He was distinctly glad that one house at least had set the example.

The path dropped beneath his feet on a shelf of solid rock that curved over like the edge of a waterfall. Tarvin took only one step, and fell, for the rock was worn into deep gutters, smoother than ice, by the naked feet of millions who had trodden that way for no man knew how many

years. When he rose he heard a malignant chuckle, half suppressed, which ended in a choking cough, ceased, and broke out anew. Tarvin registered an oath to find that scoffer when he had found the necklace, and looked to his foothold more carefully. At this point it seemed that the Cow's Mouth must be some sort of disused quarry fringed to the lips with rank vegetation.

All sight of what lay below him was blocked by the thick foliage of trees that leaned forward, bowing their heads together as night-watchers huddle over a corpse. Once upon a time there had been rude steps leading down the almost sheer descent, but the naked feet had worn them to glassy knobs and lumps, and blown dust had made a thin soil in their chinks. Tarvin looked long and angrily, because the laugh came from the bottom of this track, and then, digging his heel into the mould, began to let himself down step by step, steadying himself by the tufts of grass. Before he had realised it, he was out of reach of the sun, and neck deep in tall grass. Still there was a sort of pathway under his feet, down the almost perpendicular side. He gripped the grass, and went on. The earth beneath his elbows grew moist, and the rock where it cropped out showed rotten with moisture and coated with moss. The air grew cold and damp. Another plunge down-

ward revealed to him what the trees were guarding, as he drew breath on a narrow stone ledge. They sprang from the masonry round the sides of a square tank of water so stagnant that it had corrupted past corruption, and lay dull blue under the blackness of the trees. The drought of summer had shrunk it, and a bank of dried mud ran round its sides. The head of a sunken stone pillar, carved with monstrous and obscene gods, reared itself from the water like the head of a tortoise swimming to land. The birds moved in the sunlit branches of the trees far overhead. Little twigs and berries dropped into the water, and the noise of their fall echoed from side to side of the tank that received no sunlight.

The chuckle that had so annoyed Tarvin broke out again as he listened. This time it was behind him, and wheeling sharply, he saw that it came from a thin stream of water that spurted fitfully from the rudely carved head of a cow, and dripped along a stone spout into the heavy blue pool. Behind that spout the moss-grown rock rose sheer. This, then, was the Cow's Mouth.

The tank lay at the bottom of a shaft, and the one way down to it was that by which Tarvin had come—a path that led from the sunlight to the chill and mould of a vault.

'Well, this is kind of the King, anyhow,' he

said, pacing the ledge cautiously, for it was almost as slippery as the pathway on the rocks. 'Now, what's the use of this?' he continued, returning. The ledge ran only round one side of the tank, and, unless he trusted to the mud-banks on the other three, there was no hope of continuing his exploration further. The Cow's Mouth chuckled again, as a fresh jet of water forced its way through the formless jaws.

'Oh, dry up!' he muttered impatiently, staring through the half light that veiled all.

He dropped a piece of rock on the mud under the lip of the ledge, then tested it with a cautious foot, found that it bore, and decided to walk round the tank. As there were more trees to the right of the ledge than to the left, he stepped off on the mud from the right, holding cautiously to the branches and the tufts of grass in case of any false step.

When the tank was first made its rock walls had been perfectly perpendicular, but time and weather and the war of the tree roots had broken and scarred the stone in a thousand places, giving a scant foothold here and there.

Tarvin crept along the right side of the tank, resolved, whatever might come, to go round it. The gloom deepened as he came directly under the largest fig-tree, throwing a thousand arms

across the water, and buttressing the rock with snake-like roots as thick as a man's body. Here, sitting on a bole, he rested and looked at the ledge. The sun, shooting down the path that he had trampled through the tall grass, threw one patch of light on the discoloured marble of the ledge and on the blunt muzzle of the cow's head; but where Tarvin rested under the fig-tree there was darkness, and an intolerable scent of musk. The blue water was not inviting to watch; he turned his face inward to the rock and the trees, and looking up, caught the emerald-green of a parrot's wing moving among the upper branches. Never in his life had Tarvin so acutely desired the blessed sunshine. He was cold and damp, and conscious that a gentle breeze was blowing in his face from between the snaky tree roots.

It was the sense of space more than actual sight that told him that there was a passage before him shrouded by the roots on which he sat, and it was his racial instinct of curiosity rather than any love of adventure that led him to throw himself at the darkness, which parted before and closed behind him. He could feel that his feet were treading on cut stone overlaid with a thin layer of dried mud, and, extending his arms, found masonry on either side. Then he lighted a match, and congratulated himself that his ignorance of cows'

mouths had not led him to bring a lantern with him. The first match flickered in the draught and went out, and before the flame had died he heard a sound in front of him like the shivering backward draw of a wave on a pebbly beach. The noise was not inspiriting, but Tarvin pressed on for a few steps, looking back to see that the dull glimmer of the outer day was still behind him, and lighted another match, guarding it with his hands. At his next step he shuddered from head to foot. His heel had crashed through a skull on the ground.

The match showed him that he had quitted the passage, and was standing in a black space of unknown dimensions. He fancied that he saw the outline of a pillar, or rows of pillars, flickering drunkenly in the gloom, and was all too sure that the ground beneath him was strewn with bones. Then he became aware of pale emerald eyes watching him fixedly, and perceived that there was deep breathing in the place other than his own. He flung the match down, the eyes retreated, there was a wild rattle and crash in the darkness, a howl that might have been bestial or human, and Tarvin, panting between the tree roots, swung himself to the left, and fled back over the mud-banks to the ledge, where he stood, his back to the Cow's Mouth and his revolver in his hand.

In that moment of waiting for what might emerge from the hole in the side of the tank, Tarvin tasted all the agonies of pure physical terror. Then he noted with the tail of his eye that a length of mud-bank to his left—half the mud-bank, in fact—was moving slowly into the water. It floated slowly across the tank, a long welt of filth and slime. Nothing came out of the hole between the fig-tree roots, but the mud-bank grounded under the ledge almost at Tarvin's feet, and opened horny eyelids, heavy with green slime.

The Western man is familiar with many strange things, but the alligator does not come within the common range of his experiences. A second time Tarvin moved from point to point without being able to explain the steps he took to that end. He found himself sitting in the sunshine at the head of the slippery path that led downwards. His hands were full of the wholesome jungle grass and the clean dry dust. He could see the dead city about him, and he felt that it was home.

The Cow's Mouth chuckled and choked out of sight as it had chuckled since the making of the tank, and that was at the making of time. A man, old, crippled, and all but naked, came through the high grass leading a little kid, and calling mechanically from time to time, '*Ao*,

Bhai! Ao!' 'Come, brother! Come!' Tarvin marvelled first at his appearance on earth at all, and next that he could so unconcernedly descend the path to the darkness and the horror below. He did not know that the sacred crocodile of the Cow's Mouth was waiting for his morning meal, as he had waited in the days when Gunnaur was peopled, and its queens never dreamed of death.

END OF VOL. I

Printed by R. & R. Clark, Limited, *Edinburgh.*

THE SERVICE KIPLING.

26 *Vols.* 16*mo.*

Blue Cloth. 2*s.* 6*d. net per Vol.*

The volumes are printed in an old-style type designed after an old Venetian model and known as the Dolphin Type. They will be issued in the following order :—

Plain Tales from the Hills. 2 Vols. Soldiers Three. 2 Vols.	1914 *November*
Wee Willie Winkie. 2 Vols. From Sea to Sea. 4 Vols.	*December*
Life's Handicap. 2 Vols. The Light that Failed. 2 Vols.	1915 *January*
The Naulahka. 2 Vols. Many Inventions. 2 Vols.	*February*
The Day's Work. 2 Vols. Kim. 2 Vols.	*March*
Traffics and Discoveries. 2 Vols. Actions and Reactions. 2 Vols.	*April*

MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD., LONDON.

THE WORKS OF RUDYARD KIPLING.

UNIFORM EDITION.

Extra Crown 8vo. Red Cloth, with Gilt Tops. 6s. each.

POCKET EDITION.

Fcap 8vo. Printed on Thin Paper. With Gilt Edges. In Scarlet Limp Leather, 5s. net; in Blue Cloth, 4s. 6d. net per Volume.

PLAIN TALES FROM THE HILLS. Seventy-ninth Thousand.

LIFE'S HANDICAP. Being Stories of Mine Own People. Sixty-sixth Thousand.

MANY INVENTIONS. Sixty-second Thousand.

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED. Seventy-eighth Thousand.

WEE WILLIE WINKIE, and other Stories. Fortieth Thousand.

SOLDIERS THREE, and other Stories. Forty-fifth Thousand.

"CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS." A Story of the Grand Banks. Illustrated by I. W. TABER. Forty-eighth Thousand.

THE JUNGLE BOOK. With Illustrations by J. L. KIPLING, W. H. DRAKE, and P. FRENZENY. One-hundred-and-Thirty-Fourth Thousand.

THE DAY'S WORK. Eighty-sixth Thousand.

THE SECOND JUNGLE BOOK. With Illustrations by J. LOCKWOOD KIPLING. Seventy-fifth Thousand.

STALKY & CO. Fifty-ninth Thousand.

FROM SEA TO SEA. Letters of Travel. In Two Vols. Twenty-ninth Thousand.

THE NAULAHKA. A Story of West and East. By RUDYARD KIPLING and WOLCOTT BALESTIER. Twenty-fifth Thousand.

KIM. Illustrated by J. LOCKWOOD KIPLING. Ninety-seventh Thousand.

JUST SO STORIES FOR LITTLE CHILDREN. Illustrated by the Author. Eighty-third Thousand.

TRAFFICS AND DISCOVERIES. Forty-sixth Thousand.

PUCK OF POOK'S HILL. With Illustrations by H. R. MILLAR. Forty-ninth Thousand.

ACTIONS AND REACTIONS. Forty-fifth Thousand.

REWARDS AND FAIRIES. With Illustrations by FRANK CRAIG. Forty-third Thousand.

SONGS FROM BOOKS. Uniform with Poetical Works. Crown 8vo. 6s. Pocket Edition. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth, 4s. 6d. net. Leather, 5s. net. Edition de Luxe. 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

Also issued in Special Binding for Presentation. Extra Gilt Cloth, Gilt Edges. Price 6s. each.

SOLDIER TALES. With Illustrations by A. S. HARTRICK. Fourteenth Thousand.

THE JUNGLE BOOK. Illustrated.

THE SECOND JUNGLE BOOK. Illustrated.

"CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS." Illustrated.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD., LONDON.

LIBRARY

PR 4854 .N27 1915 v.1 SMC
Kipling, Rudyard,
The Naulahka